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PREFACES,
BIOGRAPHICAL
AND
CRITICAL,
TO THE
WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS.
BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

VOLUME THE SEVENTH.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY J. NICHOLS;

FOR C. BATHURST, J. BUCKLAND, W. STRAHAN, J. RIVINGTON AND SONS, T. DAVIES, T. PAYNE, L. DAVIS, W. OWEN, B. WHITE, S. CROWDER, T. CASLON, T. LONGMAN, B. LAW, C. DILLY, J. DODSLEY, J. WILKIE, J. ROBSON, J. JOHNSON, T. LOWNDES, G. ROBINSON, T. CADELL, J. NICHOLS, E. NEWBERRY, T. EVANS, J. RIDLEY, R. BALDWIN, G. NICOL, LEIGH AND SOTHEBY, J. BEW, N. CONANT, J. MURRAY, W. FOX, J. BOWEN.

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M DCC LXXXI.

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PREFACE

TO

POPE.

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PREFACE

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POPE.

ALEXANDER POPE was born in London, May 22, 1688, of parents whoſe rank or ſtation was never aſcertained: we are informed that they were of *gentle blood*; that his father was of a family of which the Earl of Downe was the head, and that his mother was the daughter of William Turner, Eſquire, of York, who had likewiſe three ſons, one of whom had the honour of being killed, and the other of dying, in the ſervice of Charles the Firſt;

the third was made a general officer in Spain, from whom the ſiſter inherited what ſequeſtrations and forfeitures had left in the family.

This, and this only, is told by Pope; who is more willing, as I have heard obſerved, to ſhew what his father was not, than what he was. It is allowed that he grew rich by trade; but whether in a ſhop or on the Exchange has never been diſcovered. Both parents were papiſts.

Pope was from his birth of a conſtitution tender and delicate; but is ſaid to have ſhewn remarkable gentleneſs and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition. The weakneſs of his body continued through his life, but the mildneſs of his mind perhaps ended with his childhood. His voice,

voice, when he was young, was ſo pleaſing, that he was called in fondneſs the *little Nightingale*.

Being not ſent early to ſchool, he was taught to read by an aunt; and when he was ſeven or eight years old became a lover of books. He firſt learned to write by imitating printed books; a ſpecies of penmanſhip in which he retained great excellence through his whole life, though his ordinary hand was not elegant.

When he was about eight, he was placed in Hampſhire under Taverner, a Romiſh prieſt, who, by a method very rarely practiſed, taught him the Greek and Latin rudiments together. He was now firſt regularly initiated in poetry by

the peruſal of Ogylby's *Homer*, and Sandys's *Ovid*: Ogylby's aſſiſtance he never repaid with any praiſe; but of Sandys he declared, in his notes to the *Iliad*, that Engliſh poetry owed much of its preſent beauty to his tranſlations. Sandys very rarely attempted original compoſition.

From the care of Taverner, under whom his proficiency was conſiderable, he was removed to a ſchool at Twyford near Wincheſter, and again to another ſchool about Hyde-park Corner; from which he uſed ſometimes to ſtroll to the playhouſe, and was ſo delighted with theatrical exhibitions, that he formed a kind of play from Ogylby's *Iliad*, with ſome verſes of his own intermixed,

which he perſuaded his ſchool-fellows to act, with the addition of his maſter's gardener, who perſonated *Ajax*.

At the two laſt ſchools he uſed to repreſent himſelf as having loſt part of what Taverner had taught him, and on his maſter at Twyford he had already exerciſed his poetry in a lampoon. Yet under thoſe maſters he tranſlated more than a fourth part of the *Metamorphoſes*. If he kept the ſame proportion in his other exerciſes, it cannot be thought that his loſs was great.

He tells of himſelf, in his poems, that *he liſp'd in numbers*; and uſed to ſay that he could not remember the time when he began to make verſes. In the ſtyle of fiction it might have been ſaid

of him as of Pindar, that when he lay in his cradle *the bees ſwarmed about his mouth.*

About the time of the Revolution his father, who was undoubtedly diſappointed by the ſudden blaſt of popiſh proſperity, quitted his trade, whatever it was, and retired to Binfield in Windſor Foreſt, with about twenty thouſand pounds; for which, being conſcientiouſly determined not to intruſt it to the government, he found no better uſe than that of locking it up in a cheſt, and taking from it what his expences required; and his life was long enough to conſume a great part of it, before his ſon came to the inheritance.

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To Binfield Pope was called by his father when he was about twelve years old; and there he had for a few months the aſſiſtance of one Deane, another prieſt, of whom he learned only to conſtrue a little of *Tully's Offices*. How Mr. Deane could ſpend, with a boy who had tranſlated ſo much of *Ovid*, ſome months over a ſmall part of *Tully's Offices*, it is now vain to enquire.

Of a youth ſo ſucceſsfully employed, and ſo conſpicuouſly improved, a minute account muſt be naturally deſired; but curioſity muſt be contented with confuſed, imperfect, and ſometimes improbable intelligence. Pope, finding little advantage from external help, reſolved thenceforward to direct himſelf, and at

twelve formed a plan of ſtudy which he completed with little other incitement than the deſire of excellence.

His primary and principal purpoſe was to be a poet, with which his father accidentally concurred, by propoſing ſubjects, and obliging him to correct his performances by many reviſals; after which the old gentleman, when he was ſatisfied, would ſay *theſe are good rhymes*.

In his peruſal of the Engliſh poets he ſoon diſtinguiſhed the verſification of Dryden, which he conſidered as the model to be ſtudied, and was impreſſed with ſuch veneration for his inſtructer, that he perſuaded ſome friends to take him to the coffee-houſe which Dryden fre-

frequented, and pleaſed himſelf with having ſeen him.

Dryden died May 1, 1701; ſome days before Pope was twelve; ſo early muſt he therefore have felt the power of harmony, and the zeal of genius. Who does not wiſh that Dryden could have known the value of the homage that was paid him, and foreſeen the greatneſs of his young admirer?

The earlieſt of Pope's productions is his *Ode on Solitude*, written before he was twelve, in which there is nothing more than other forward boys have attained; and which is not equal to Cowley's performances at the ſame age.

His time was now ſpent wholly in reading and writing. As he read the

Claſ-

Claſſicks, he amuſed himſelf with tranſlating them; and at fourteen made a verſion of the firſt book of the *Thebais*, which, with ſome reviſion, he afterwards publiſhed. He muſt have been at this time, if he had no help, a conſiderable proficient in the Latin tongue.

By Dryden's Fables, which had then been not long publiſhed, and were much in the hands of poetical readers, he was tempted to try his own ſkill in giving Chaucer a more faſhionable appearance, and put *January and May*, and the *Prologue of the Wife of Bath*, into modern Engliſh. He tranſlated likewiſe the Epiſtle of *Sappho to Phaon* from Ovid, to complete the verſion, which was before imperfect; and wrote ſome

ſome other ſmall pieces, which he afterwards printed.

He ſometimes imitated the Engliſh poets, and profeſſed to have written at fourteen his poem upon *Silence*, after Rocheſter's *Nothing*. He had now formed his verſification, and in the ſmoothneſs of his numbers ſurpaſſed his original: but this is but a ſmall part of his praiſe; he diſcovers ſuch acquaintance both with human life and publick affairs as is not eaſily conceived to have been attainable by a boy of fourteen in *Windſor Foreſt*.

Next year he was deſirous of opening to himſelf new ſources of knowledge, by making himſelf acquainted with modern languages; and removed for a time

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to London, that he might ſtudy French and Italian, which, as he deſired nothing more than to read them, were by diligent application ſoon diſpatched. Of Italian learning he does not appear to have ever made much uſe in his ſubſequent ſtudies.

He then returned to Binfield, and delighted himſelf with his own poetry. He tried all ſtyles, and many ſubjects. He wrote a comedy, a tragedy, an epick poem, with panegyricks on all the Princes of Europe; and, as he confeſſes, *thought himſelf the greateſt genius that ever was.* Self-confidence is the firſt requiſite to great undertakings; he, indeed, who forms his opinion of himſelf in ſolitude, without knowing the powers

of

of other men, is very liable to errour; but it was the felicity of Pope to rate himſelf at his real value.

Moſt of his puerile productions were, by his maturer judgement, afterwards deſtroyed; *Alcander*, the epick poem, was burnt by the perſuaſion of Atterbury. The tragedy was founded on the legend of *St. Genevieve*. Of the comedy there is no account.

Concerning his ſtudies it is related, that he tranſlated Tully *on old Age*; and that, beſides his books of poetry and criticiſm, he read *Temple's Eſſays* and *Locke on human Underſtanding*. His reading, though his favourite authors are not known, appears to have been ſufficiently extenſive and multifarious; for his

his early pieces ſhew, with ſufficient evidence, his knowledge of books.

He that is pleaſed with himſelf, eaſily imagines that he ſhall pleaſe others. Sir William Trumbal, who had been ambaſſador at Conſtantinople, and ſecretary of ſtate, when he retired from buſineſs, fixed his reſidence in the neighbourhood of Binfield. Pope, not yet ſixteen, was introduced to the ſtateſman of ſixty, and ſo diſtinguiſhed himſelf that their interviews ended in friendſhip and correſpondence. Pope was, through his whole life, ambitious of ſplendid acquaintance, and he ſeems to have wanted neither diligence nor ſucceſs in attracting the notice of the great; for from his firſt entrance into the world,

and

and his entrance was very early, he was admitted to familiarity with thoſe whoſe rank or ſtation made them moſt conſpicuous.

From the age of ſixteen the life of Pope, as an author, may be properly computed. He now wrote his Paſtorals, which were ſhewn to the Poets and Criticks of that time; as they well deſerved, they were read with admiration, and many praiſes were beſtowed upon them and upon the Preface, which is both elegant and learned in a high degree: they were, however, not publiſhed till five years afterwards.

Cowley, Milton, and Pope, are diſtinguiſhed among the Engliſh Poets by the early exertion of their powers; but

the works of Cowley alone were publiſhed in his childhood, and therefore of him only can it be certain that his puerile performances received no improvement from his maturer ſtudies.

At this time began his acquaintance with Wicherley, a man who ſeems to have had among his contemporaries his full ſhare of reputation, to have been eſteemed without virtue, and careſſed without good-humour. Pope was proud of his notice; Wycherley wrote verſes in his praiſe, which he was charged by Dennis with writing to himſelf, and they agreed for a while to flatter one another. It is pleaſant to remark how ſoon Pope learned the cant of an author, and began to treat criticks with contempt,

tempt, though he had yet ſuffered nothing from them.

But the fondneſs of Wycherley was too violent to laſt. His eſteem of Pope was ſuch, that he ſubmitted ſome poems to his reviſion; and when Pope, perhaps proud of ſuch confidence, was ſufficiently bold in his criticiſms, and liberal in his alterations, the old ſcribler was angry to ſee his pages defaced, and felt more pain from the detection than content from the amendment of his faults. They parted; but Pope always conſidered him with kindneſs, and viſited him a little time before he died.

Another of his early correſpondents was Mr. Cromwel, of whom I have learned nothing particular but that he

uſed to ride a-hunting in a tye-wig. He was fond, and perhaps vain, of amuſing himſelf with poetry and criticiſm; and ſometimes ſent his performances to Pope, who did not forbear ſuch remarks as were now-and-then unwelcome. Pope, in his turn, put the juvenile verſion of *Statius* into his hands for correction.

Their correſpondence afforded the publick its firſt knowledge of Pope's Epiſtolary Powers; for his Letters were given by Cromwel to one Mrs. Thomas, and ſhe many years afterwards ſold them to Curll, who inſerted them in a volume of his Miſcellanies.

Walſh, a name yet preſerved among the minor poets, was one of his firſt encouragers. His regard was gained by

by the Paſtorals, and from him Pope received the counſel by which he ſeems to have regulated his ſtudies. Walſh adviſed him to correctneſs, which, as he told him, the Engliſh poets had hitherto neglected, and which therefore was left to him as a baſis of fame; and, being delighted with rural poems, recommended to him to write a paſtoral comedy, like thoſe which are read ſo eagerly in Italy; a deſign which Pope probably did not approve, as he did not follow it.

Pope had now declared himſelf a poet; and, thinking himſelf entitled to poetical converſation, began at ſeventeen to frequent Will's, a coffee-houſe on the north ſide of Ruſſel-ſtreet in Covent-

garden, where the wits of that time uſed to aſſemble, and where Dryden had, when he lived, been accuſtomed to preſide.

During this period of his life he was indefatigably diligent, and inſatiably curious; wanting health for violent and money for expenſive pleaſures, and having certainly excited in himſelf very ſtrong deſires of intellectual eminence, he ſpent much of his time over his books; but he read only to ſtore his mind with facts and images, ſeizing all that his authors preſented with undiſtinguiſhing voracity, and with an appetite for knowledge too eager to be nice. In a mind like his, however, all the faculties were at once involuntarily im-

improving. Judgement is forced upon us by experience. He that reads many books muſt compare one opinion or one ſtyle with another, and when he compares muſt neceſſarily diſtinguiſh, reject, and prefer. But the account given by himſelf of his ſtudies was, that from fourteen to twenty he read only for amuſement, from twenty to twenty-ſeven for improvement and inſtruction; that in the firſt part of this time he deſired only to know, and in the ſecond he endeavoured to judge.

The Paſtorals, which had been for ſome time handed about among poets and criticks, were at laſt printed (1709) in Tonſon's Miſcellany, in a volume

which began with the Paſtorals of Philips, and ended with thoſe of Pope.

The ſame year was written the *Eſſay on Criticiſm*; a work which diſplays ſuch extent of comprehenſion, ſuch nicety of diſtinction, ſuch acquaintance with mankind, and ſuch knowledge both of ancient and modern learning, as are not often attained by the matureſt age and longeſt experience. It was publiſhed about two years afterwards, and being praiſed by Addiſon in the *Spectator* with ſufficient liberality, met with ſo much favour as enraged Dennis, "who," he ſays, "found himſelf attacked, with-"out any manner of provocation on his "ſide, and attacked in his perſon, in-"ſtead of his writings, by one who was "wholly

" wholly a ſtranger to him, at a time " when all the world knew he was per- " ſecuted by fortune; and not only ſaw " that this was attempted in a clan- " deſtine manner, with the utmoſt falſe- " hood and calumny, but found that " all this was done by a little affected " hypocrite, who had nothing in his " mouth at the ſame time but truth, " candour, friendſhip, good-nature, hu- " manity, and magnanimity."

How the attack was clandeſtine is not eaſily perceived, nor how his perſon is depreciated; but he ſeems to have known ſomething of Pope's character, in whom may be diſcovered an appetite to talk too frequently of his own virtues.

The pamphlet is ſuch as rage might be expected to dictate. He ſuppoſes himſelf to be aſked two queſtions; whether the Eſſay will ſucceed, and who or what is the author.

Its ſucceſs he admits to be ſecured by the falſe opinions then prevalent; the author he concludes to be *young and raw*.

Firſt, becauſe he diſcovers a ſufficiency beyond his little ability, and hath raſhly undertaken a taſk infinitely above his force. Secondly, while this little author ſtruts, and affects the dictatorian air, he plainly ſhews that at the ſame time he is under the rod, and while he pretends to give law to others is a pedantick ſlave to authority and opinion.

Third-

Thirdly, he hath, like ſchoolboys, borrowed both from living and dead. Fourthly, he knows not his own mind, and frequently contradicts himſelf. Fifthly, he is almoſt perpetually in the wrong.

All theſe poſitions he attempts to prove by quotations and remarks; but his deſire to do miſchief is greater than his power. He has, however, juſtly criticiſed ſome paſſages. In theſe lines,

There are whom heav'n has bleſs'd with
ſtore of wit,
Yet want as much again to manage it;
For wit and judgement ever are at
ſtrife—

it is apparent that *wit* has two meanings, and that what is wanted, though called

called *wit*, is truly judgement. So far Dennis is undoubtedly right; but, not content with argument, he will have a little mirth, and triumphs over the firſt couplet in terms too elegant to be forgotten. "By the way, what rare num-"bers are here! Would not one ſwear "that this youngſter had eſpouſed ſome "antiquated Muſe, who had ſued out "a divorce on account of impotence "from ſome ſuperannuated ſinner; and, "having been p—xed by her former "ſpouſe, has got the gout in her de-"crepit age, which makes her hobble "ſo damnably." This was the man who would reform a nation ſinking into barbarity.

In another place Pope himſelf allowed that Dennis had detected one of thoſe blunders which are called *bulls*. The firſt edition had this line:

What is this wit—
Where wanted, ſcorn'd, and envied where acquir'd?

"How," ſays the critick, "can wit be "*ſcorn'd* where it is not? Is not this a "figure frequently employed in Hiber-"nian land? The perſon that wants this "wit may indeed be ſcorned, but the "ſcorn ſhews the honour which the "contemner has for wit." Of this remark Pope made the proper uſe, by correcting the paſſage.

I have preſerved, I think, all that is reaſonable in Dennis's criticiſm; it remains

mains that juſtice be done to his delicacy.
" For his acquaintance (ſays Dennis) he
" names Mr. Walſh, who had by no means
" the qualification which this author rec-
" kons abſolutely neceſſary to a critick, it
" being very certain that he was, like
" this Eſſayer, a very indifferent poet;
" he loved to be well-dreſſed; and I re-
" member a little young gentleman
" whom Mr. Walſh uſed to take into
" his company, as a double foil to his
" perſon and capacity.—Enquire be-
" tween *Sunninghill* and *Oakingham* for
" a young, ſhort, ſquab gentleman, the
" very bow of the God of Love, and
" tell me whether he be a proper author
" to make perſonal reflections?—He
" may extol the antients, but he has
" reaſon

"reaſon to thank the gods that he was "born a modern; for had he been born "of Grecian parents, and his father "conſequently had by law had the ab- "ſolute diſpoſal of him, his life had "been no longer than that of one of "his poems, the life of half a day.— "Let the perſon of a gentleman of his "parts be never ſo contemptible, his "inward man is ten times more ridi- "culous; it being impoſſible that his "outward form, though it be that of "downright monkey, ſhould differ ſo "much from human ſhape, as his un- "thinking immaterial part does from "human underſtanding." Thus began the hoſtility between Pope and Dennis, which, though it was ſuſpended for a

ſhort

ſhort time, never was appeaſed. Pope ſeems, at firſt, to have attacked him wantonly; but though he always profeſſed to deſpiſe him, he diſcovers, by mentioning him often, that he felt his force or his venom.

Of this Eſſay Pope declared that he did not expect the ſale to be quick, becauſe *not one gentleman in ſixty, even of liberal education, could underſtand it.* The gentlemen, and the education of that time, ſeem to have been of a lower character than they are of this. He mentions a thouſand copies as a numerous impreſſion.

Dennis was not his only cenſurer; the zealous papiſts thought the monks treated with too much contempt, and Eraſmus

mus too ſtudiouſly praiſed; but to theſe objections he had not much regard.

The *Eſſay* has been tranſlated into French by *Hamilton*, author of the *Comte de Grammont*, whoſe verſion was never printed, by *Robotham*, ſecretary to the King for Hanover, and by *Reſnel*; and commented by Dr. Warburton, who has diſcovered in it ſuch order and connection as was not perceived by Addiſon, nor, as is ſaid, intended by the author.

Almoſt every poem, conſiſting of precepts, is ſo far arbitrary and immethodical, that many of the paragraphs may change places with no apparent inconvenience; for of two or more poſitions, depending upon ſome remote and ge-

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neral principle, there is ſeldom any cogent reaſon why one ſhould precede the other. But for the order in which they ſtand, whatever it be, a little ingenuity may eaſily give a reaſon. *It is poſſible*, ſays Hooker, *that by long circumduction, from any one truth all truth may be inferred.* Of all homogeneous truths at leaſt, of all truths reſpecting the ſame general end, in whatever ſeries they may be produced, a concatenation by intermediate ideas may be formed, ſuch as when, it is once ſhewn, ſhall appear natural; but if this order be reverſed, another mode of connection equally ſpecious may be found or made. Ariſtotle is praiſed for naming Fortitude firſt of the cardinal virtues, as that with-

out which no other virtue can ſteadily be practiſed; but he might, with equal propriety, have placed Prudence and Juſtice before it, ſince without Prudence Fortitude is mad; without Juſtice, it is miſchievous.

As the end of method is perſpicuity, that ſeries is ſufficiently regular that avoids obſcurity; and where there is no obſcurity it will not be difficult to diſcover method.

In the *Spectator* was publiſhed the *Meſſiah*, which he firſt ſubmitted to the peruſal of Steele, and corrected in compliance with his criticiſms.

It is reaſonable to infer, from his Letters, that the verſes on the *Unfortunate Lady* were written about the time

when his *Eſſay* was publiſhed. The Lady's name and adventures I have ſought with fruitleſs enquiry.

I can therefore tell no more than I have learned from Mr. Ruffhead, who writes with the confidence of one who could truſt his information. She was a woman of eminent rank and large fortune, the ward of an unkle, who, having given her a proper education, expected like other guardians that ſhe ſhould make at leaſt an equal match, and ſuch he propoſed to her, but found it rejected in favour of a young gentleman of inferior condition.

Having diſcovered the correſpondence between the two lovers, and finding the young lady determined to abide by her own

own choice, he ſuppoſed that ſeparation might do what can rarely be done by arguments, and ſent her into a foreign country, where ſhe was obliged to converſe only with thoſe from whom her unkle had nothing to fear.

Her lover took care to repeat his vows; but his letters were intercepted and carried to her guardian, who directed her to be watched with ſtill greater vigilance; till of this reſtraint ſhe grew ſo impatient, that ſhe bribed a woman-ſervant to procure her a ſword, which ſhe directed to her heart.

From this account, given with evident intention to raiſe the Lady's character, it does not appear that ſhe had any claim to praiſe, nor much to com-

paſſion. She ſeems to have been impatient, violent, and ungovernable. Her unkle's power could not have laſted long; the hour of liberty and choice would have come in time. But her deſires were too hot for delay, and ſhe liked ſelf-murder better than ſuſpenſe.

Nor is it diſcovered that the unkle, whoever he was, is with much juſtice delivered to poſterity as a *falſe Guardian*; he ſeems to have done only that for which a guardian is appointed; he endeavoured to direct his niece till ſhe ſhould be able to direct herſelf. Poetry has not often been worſe employed than in dignifying the amorous fury of a raving girl.

Not

Not long after he wrote the *Rape of the Lock*, the moſt airy, the moſt ingenious, and the moſt delightful of all his compoſitions, occaſioned by a frolick of gallantry, rather too familiar, in which Lord Petre cut off a lock of Mrs. Arabella Fermor's hair. This, whether ſtealth or violence, was ſo much reſented, that the commerce of the two families, before very friendly, was interrupted. Mr. Caryl, a gentleman who, being ſecretary to King James's Queen, had followed his Miſtreſs into France, and as the author of *Sir Solomon Single*, a comedy, and ſome tranſlations, was entitled to the notice of a wit, ſolicited Pope to endea-

vour a reconciliation by a ludicrous poem, which might bring both the parties to a better temper. In compliance with Caryl's requeſt, though his name was for a long time marked only by the firſt and laſt letter, C—l, a poem of two cantos was written (1711), as is ſaid, in a fortnight, and ſent to the offended Lady, who liked it well enough to ſhew it; and, with the uſual proceſs of literary tranſactions, the author, dreading a ſurreptitious edition, was forced to publiſh it.

The event is ſaid to have been ſuch as was deſired; the pacification and diverſion of all to whom it related, except Sir *George Brown*, who complained with

with ſome bitterneſs that, in the character of *Sir Plume*, he was made to talk nonſenſe. Whether all this be true, I have ſome doubt; for at Paris, a few years ago, a niece of Mrs. Fermor, who preſided in an Engliſh Convent, mentioned Pope's work with very little gratitude, rather as an inſult than an honour; and ſhe may be ſuppoſed to have inherited the opinion of her family.

At its firſt appearance it was termed by Addiſon *merum ſal*. Pope, however, ſaw that it was capable of improvement; and having luckily contrived to borrow his machinery from the *Roſicrucians*, imparted the ſcheme with which his head was teeming to Addiſon, who told

him that his work, as it ſtood, was *a delicious little thing*, and gave him no encouragement to retouch it.

This has been too haſtily conſidered as an inſtance of Addiſon's jealouſy; for as he could not gueſs the conduct of the new deſign, or the poſſibilities of pleaſure compriſed in a fiction of which there had been no examples, he might very reaſonably and kindly perſuade the author to acquieſce in his own proſperity, and forbear an attempt which he conſidered as an unneceſſary hazard.

Addiſon's counſel was happily rejected. Pope foreſaw the future efflorescence of imagery then budding in his mind, and reſolved to ſpare no art, or induſtry of cultivation. The ſoft luxu-

luxuriance of his fancy was already shooting, and all the gay varieties of diction were ready at his hand to colour and embellish it.

His attempt was justified by its success. The *Rape of the Lock* stands forward, in the classes of literature, as the most exquisite example of ludicrous poetry. Berkley congratulated him upon the display of powers more truly poetical than he had shewn before; with elegance of description and justness of precepts, he had now exhibited boundless fertility of invention.

He always considered the intertexture of the machinery with the action as his most successful exertion of poetical art. He indeed could never afterwards produce

duce any thing of ſuch unexampled excellence. Thoſe performances, which ſtrike with wonder, are combinations of ſkilful genius with happy caſualty; and it is not likely that any felicity, like the diſcovery of a new race of preternatural agents, ſhould happen twice to the ſame man.

Of this poem the author was, I think, allowed to enjoy the praiſe for a long time without diſturbance. Many years afterwards Dennis publiſhed ſome remarks upon it, with very little force, and with no effect; for the opinion of the publick was already ſettled, and it was no longer at the mercy of criticiſm.

About

About this time he publiſhed the *Temple of Fame*, which, as he tells Steele in their correſpondence, he had written two years before; that is, when he was only twenty-two years old, an early time of life for ſo much learning and ſo much obſervation as that work exhibits.

On this poem Dennis afterwards publiſhed ſome remarks, of which the moſt reaſonable is, that ſome of the lines repreſent *motion* as exhibited by *ſculpture*.

Of the Epiſtle from *Eloiſa to Abelard*, I do not know the date. His firſt inclination to attempt a compoſition of that tender kind aroſe, as Mr. Savage told me, from his peruſal of Prior's *Nut-brown Maid*. How much he has ſurpaſſed Prior's work it is not neceſſary

to

to mention, when perhaps it may be ſaid with juſtice, that he has excelled every compoſition of the ſame kind. The mixture of religious hope and reſignation gives an elevation and dignity to diſappointed love, which images merely natural cannot beſtow. The gloom of a convent ſtrikes the imagination with far greater force than the ſolitude of a grove.

This piece was, however, not much his favourite in his latter years, though I never heard upon what principle he ſlighted it.

In the next year (1713) he publiſhed *Windſor Foreſt*; of which part was, as he relates, written at ſixteen, about the ſame time as his Paſtorals, and the latter

ter part was added afterwards: where the addition begins we are not told. The lines relating to the Peace confeſs their own date. It is dedicated to Lord Lanſdown, who was then high in reputation and influence among the Tories; and it is ſaid that the concluſion of the poem gave great pain to Addiſon, both as a poet and a politician. Reports like this are often ſpread with boldneſs very diſproportionate to their evidence. Why ſhould Addiſon receive any particular diſturbance from the laſt lines of *Windſor Foreſt?* If contrariety of opinion could poiſon a politician, he would not live a day; and, as a poet, he muſt have felt Pope's force of genius much more from many other parts of his works.

The

The pain that Addiſon might feel it is not likely that he would confeſs; and it is certain that he ſo well ſuppreſſed his diſcontent, that Pope now thought himſelf his favourite; for having been conſulted in the reviſal of *Cato*, he introduced it by a Prologue; and, when Dennis publiſhed his Remarks, undertook not indeed to vindicate but to revenge his friend, by a *Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis.*

There is reaſon to believe that Addiſon gave no encouragement to this diſingenuous hoſtility; for, ſays Pope, in a Letter to him, "indeed your opinion, "that 'tis entirely to be neglected, "would be my own in my own caſe; "but I felt more warmth here than I

"did

" did when I firſt ſaw his book againſt " myſelf (though indeed in two minutes " it made me heartily merry)." Addiſon was not a man on whom ſuch cant of ſenſibility could make much impreſſion. He left the pamphlet to itſelf, having diſowned it to Dennis, and perhaps did not think Pope to have deſerved much by his officiouſneſs.

This year was printed in the *Guardian* the ironical compariſon between the Paſtorals of Phillips and Pope; a compoſition of artifice, criticiſm, and literature, to which nothing equal will eaſily be found. The ſuperiority of Pope is ſo ingeniouſly diſſembled, and the feeble lines of Phillips ſo ſkilfully preferred, that Steele, being deceived, was unwilling

willing to print the paper leſt Pope ſhould be offended. Addiſon immediately ſaw the writer's deſign; and, as it ſeems, had malice enough to conceal his diſcovery, and to permit a publication which, by making his friend Phillips ridiculous, made him for ever an enemy to Pope.

It appears that about this time Pope had a ſtrong inclination to unite the art of Painting with that of Poetry, and put himſelf under the tuition of Jervas. He was near-ſighted, and therefore not formed by nature for a painter: he tried however how far he could advance, and ſometimes perſuaded his friends to ſit. A picture of Betterton, ſuppoſed to be drawn by him, was in the poſſeſ-

ſion

ſon of Lord Mansfield: if this was taken from the life, he muſt have begun to paint earlier; for Betterton was now dead. Pope's ambition of this new art produced ſome encomiaſtick verſes to Jervas, which certainly ſhew his power as a poet, but I have been told that they betray his ignorance of painting.

He appears to have regarded Betterton with kindneſs and eſteem; and after his death publiſhed, under his name, a verſion into modern Engliſh of Chaucer's Prologues, and one of his Tales, which, as was related by Mr. Harte, were believed to have been the performance of Pope himſelf by Fenton, who made him a gay offer of five pounds, if he would ſhew them in the hand of Betterton.

The next year (1713) produced a bolder attempt, by which profit was ſought as well as praiſe. The poems which he had hitherto written, however they might have diffuſed his name, had made very little addition to his fortune. The allowance which his father made him, though, proportioned to what he had, it might be liberal, could not be large; his religion hindered him from the occupation of any civil employment, and he complained that he wanted even money to buy books *.

He therefore reſolved to try how far the favour of the publick extended, by ſoliciting a ſubſcription to a verſion of the *Iliad*, with large notes.

* Spence.

To

To print by ſubſcription was, for ſome time, a practice peculiar to the Engliſh. The firſt conſiderable work for which this expedient was employed is ſaid to have been Dryden's *Virgil*; and it had been tried again with great ſucceſs when the *Tatlers* were collected into volumes.

There was reaſon to believe that Pope's attempt would be ſucceſsful. He was in the full bloom of reputation, and was perſonally known to almoſt all whom dignity of employment or ſplendour of reputation had made eminent; he converſed indifferently with both parties, and never diſturbed the publick with his political opinions; and it might be naturally expected, as each faction then boaſted its literary zeal, that the

great men, who on other occaſions practiſed all the violence of oppoſition, would emulate each other in their encouragement of a poet who had delighted all, and by whom none had been offended.

With thoſe hopes, he offered an Engliſh *Iliad* to ſubſcribers, in ſix volumes in quarto, for ſix guineas; a ſum, according to the value of money at that time, by no means inconſiderable, and greater than I believe to have been ever aſked before. His propoſal, however, was very favourably received, and the patrons of literature were buſy to recommend his undertaking, and promote his intereſt. Lord Oxford, indeed, lamented that ſuch a genius ſhould be waſted

waſted upon a work not original; but propoſed no means by which he might live without it: Addiſon recommended caution and moderation, and adviſed him not to be content with the praiſe of half the nation, when he might be univerſally favoured.

The greatneſs of the deſign, the popularity of the author, and the attention of the literary world, naturally raiſed ſuch expectations of the future ſale, that the bookſellers made their offers with great eagerneſs; but the higheſt bidder was *Bernard Lintot*, who became proprietor on condition of ſupplying, at his own expence, all the copies which were to be delivered to ſubſcribers, or preſented to friends, and

paying two hundred pounds for every volume.

Of the Quartos it was, I believe, ſtipulated that none ſhould be printed but for the author, that the ſubſcription might not be depreciated; but Lintot impreſſed the ſame pages upon a ſmall Folio, and paper perhaps a little thinner; and ſold exactly at half the price, for half a guinea each volume, books ſo little inferior to the Quartos, that, by a fraud of trade, thoſe Folios, being afterwards ſhortened by cutting away the top and bottom, were ſold as copies printed for the ſubſcribers.

Lintot printed ſome on royal paper in Folio for two guineas a volume; but of this experiment he repented, and his

ſon ſold copies of the firſt volume with all their extent of margin for two ſhillings.

It is unpleaſant to relate that the bookſeller, after all his hopes and all his liberality, was, by a very unjuſt and illegal action, defrauded of his profit. An edition of the Engliſh *Iliad* was printed in Holland in Duodecimo, and imported clandeſtinely for the gratification of thoſe who were impatient to read what they could not yet afford to buy. This fraud could only be counteracted by an edition equally cheap and more commodious; and Lintot was compelled to contract his Folio at once into a Duodecimo, and loſe the advantage of an intermediate gradation. The

notes, which in the Dutch copies were placed at the end of each book, as they had been in the large volumes, were now ſubjoined to the text in the ſame page, and are therefore more eaſily conſulted. Of this edition the ſale was doubtleſs very numerous; but indeed great numbers were neceſſary to produce conſiderable profit.

Pope, having now emitted his propoſals, and engaged not only his own reputation, but in ſome degree that of his friends who patroniſed his ſubſcription, began to be frighted at his own undertaking; and finding himſelf at firſt embarraſſed with difficulties, which retarded and oppreſſed him, he was for a time timorous and uneaſy; had his nights

nights diſturbed by dreams of long journeys through unknown ways, and wiſhed, as he ſaid, *that ſomebody would hang him* *.

This miſery, however, was not of long continuance; he grew by degrees more acquainted with Homer's images and expreſſions, and practice increaſed his facility of verſification. In a ſhort time he repreſents himſelf as diſpatching regularly fifty verſes a day, which would ſhew him by an eaſy computation the termination of his labour.

His own diffidence was not his only vexation. He that aſks a ſubſcription ſoon finds that he has enemies. All who do not encourage him defame him.

* Spence.

He

He that wants money will rather be thought angry than poor, and he that wiſhes to ſave his money conceals his avarice by his malice. Addiſon had hinted his ſuſpicion that Pope was too much a Tory; and ſome of the Tories ſuſpected his principles becauſe he had contributed to the *Guardian*, which was carried on by *Steele*.

To thoſe who cenſured his politicks were added enemies yet more dangerous, who called in queſtion his knowledge of Greek, and his qualifications for a tranſlator of Homer. To theſe he made no publick oppoſition; but in one of his Letters eſcapes from them as well as he can. At an age like his, for he was not more than twenty-five, with an irregular

gular education, and a courſe of life of which much ſeems to have paſſed in converſation, it is not very likely that he overflowed with Greek. But when he felt himſelf deficient he ſought aſſiſtance, and what man of learning would refuſe to help him? Minute enquiries into the force of words are leſs neceſſary in tranſlating Homer than other poets, becauſe his poſitions are general, and his repreſentations natural, with very little dependence on local or temporary cuſtoms, on thoſe changeable ſcenes of artificial life, which, by mingling original with accidental notions, and crowding the mind with images which time effaces, produce ambiguity in diction, and obſcurity in books. To this

this open diſplay of unadulterated nature it muſt be aſcribed that Homer has fewer paſſages of doubtful meaning than any other poet either in the learned or in modern languages. I have read of a man, who being, by his ignorance of Greek, compelled to gratify his curioſity with the Latin printed on the oppoſite page, declared that from the rude ſimplicity of the lines literally rendered, he formed nobler ideas of the Homeric majeſty than from the laboured elegance of poliſhed verſions.

Thoſe literal tranſlations were always at hand, and from them he could always obtain his author's ſenſe with ſufficient certainty; and among the readers of Homer the number is very ſmall of thoſe

thoſe who find much in the Greek more than in the Latin, except the muſick of the numbers.

If more help was wanting, he had the poetical tranſlation of *Eobanus Heſſus*, an unwearied writer of Latin verſes; he had the French Homers of *La Valterie* and *Dacier*, and the Engliſh of *Chapman*, *Hobbes*, and *Ogylby*. With Chapman, whoſe work, though now totally neglected, ſeems to have been popular almoſt to the end of the laſt century, he had very frequent conſultations, and perhaps never tranſlated any paſſage till he had read his verſion, which indeed he has been ſometimes ſuſpected of uſing inſtead of the original.

Notes were likewiſe to be provided; for the ſix volumes would have been very little more than ſix pamphlets without them. What the mere peruſal of the text could ſuggeſt, Pope wanted no aſſiſtance to collect or methodize; but more was neceſſary; many pages were to be filled, and learning muſt ſupply materials to wit and judgement. Something might be gathered from Dacier; but no man loves to be indebted to his contemporaries, and Dacier was acceſſible to common readers. Euſtathius was therefore neceſſarily conſulted. To read Euſtathius, of whoſe work there was then no Latin verſion, I ſuſpect Pope, if he had been willing, not to have been able; ſome other was there-

fore

[illegible]

[illegible] bridge [illegible] grew [illegible] was [illegible] now [illegible] a man [illegible]

world, who complained that Pope, having accepted and approved his performance, never teſtified any curioſity to ſee him. The terms which Fenton uſes are very mercantile: *I think at firſt ſight that his performance is very commendable, and have ſent word for him to finiſh the 17th book, and to ſend it with his demands for his trouble. I have here enclofed the ſpecimen; if the reſt come before the return, I will keep them till I receive your order.*

Broome then offered his ſervice a ſecond time, which was probably accepted, as they had afterwards a cloſer correſpondence. Parnell contributed the Life of Homer, which Pope found ſo harſh, that he took great pains in correcting it; and

and by his own diligence, with ſuch help as kindneſs or money could procure him, in ſomewhat more than five years he completed his verſion of the *Iliad*, with the notes. He began it in 1712, his twenty-fifth year, and concluded it in 1718, his thirtieth year.

When we find him tranſlating fifty lines a day, it is natural to ſuppoſe that he would have brought his work to a more ſpeedy concluſion. The *Iliad*, containing leſs than ſixteen thouſand verſes, might have been deſpatched in leſs than three hundred and twenty days by fifty verſes in a day. The notes, compiled with the aſſiſtance of his mercenaries, could not be ſuppoſed to require more time than the text. According to this calculation, the progreſs of Pope

may ſeem to have been ſlow; but the diſtance is commonly very great between actual performances and ſpeculative poſſibility. It is natural to ſuppoſe, that as much as has been done to-day may be done to-morrow; but on the morrow ſome difficulty emerges, or ſome external impediment obſtructs. Indolence, interruption, buſineſs, and pleaſure, all take their turns of retardation; and every long work is lengthened by a thouſand cauſes that can, and ten thouſand that cannot, be recounted. Perhaps no extenſive and multifarious performance was ever effected within the term originally fixed in the undertaker's mind. He that runs againſt Time, has an antagoniſt not ſubject to caſualties.

The

The encouragement given to this tranſlation, though report ſeems to have over-rated it, was ſuch as the world has not often ſeen. The ſubſcribers were five hundred and ſeventy-five. The copies, for which ſubſcriptions were given, were ſix hundred and fifty-four. For thoſe copies Pope had nothing to pay; he therefore received, including the two hundred pounds a volume, five thouſand three hundred and twenty pounds four ſhillings, without deduction, as the books were ſupplied by Lintot.

By the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription Pope was relieved from thoſe pecuniary diſtreſſes with which, notwithſtanding his popularity, he had hitherto ſtruggled. Lord Oxford had often lamented his diſqua-

dification for publick employment, but never propoſed a penſion. While the tranſlation of *Homer* was in its progreſs, Mr. Craggs, then ſecretary of ſtate, offered to procure him a penſion, which, at leaſt during his miniſtry, might be enjoyed with ſecrecy. This was not accepted by Pope, who told him, however, that, if he ſhould be preſſed with want of money, he would ſend to him for occaſional ſupplies. Craggs was not long in power, and was never ſolicited for money by Pope, who diſdained to beg what he did not want.

With the product of this ſubſcription, which he had too much diſcretion to ſquander, he ſecured his future life from want by conſiderable annuities.

The

The eſtate of the Duke of Buckingham was found to have been charged with five hundred pounds a year, payable to Pope, which doubtleſs his tranſlation enabled him to purchaſe.

It cannot be unwelcome to literary curioſity, that I deduce thus minutely the hiſtory of the Engliſh *Iliad*. It is certainly the nobleſt verſion of poetry which the world has ever ſeen; and its publication muſt therefore be conſidered as one of the great events in the annals of Learning.

To thoſe who have ſkill to eſtimate the excellence and difficulty of this great work, it muſt be very deſirable to know how it was performed, and by what gradations it advanced to correct-

neſs. Of ſuch an intellectual proceſs the knowledge has very rarely been attainable; but happily there remains the original copy of the *Iliad*, which, being obtained by Bolingbroke as a curioſity, deſcended from him to Mallet, and is now by the ſolicitation of the late Dr. Maty repoſited in the Muſeum.

Between this manuſcript, which is written upon accidental fragments of paper, and the printed edition, there muſt have been an intermediate copy, that was perhaps deſtroyed as it returned from the preſs.

From the firſt copy I have procured a few tranſcripts, and ſhall exhibit firſt the printed lines; then, in a ſmaller print, thoſe of the manuſcripts, with all

all their variations. Thoſe words in the ſmall print which are given in Italicks, are cancelled in the copy, and the words placed under them adopted in their ſtead.

The beginning of the firſt book ſtands thus:

The wrath of Peleus' ſon, the direful
ſpring
Of all the Grecian woes, O Goddeſs, ſing;
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's
gloomy reign
The ſouls of mighty chiefs untimely ſlain.

The ſtern Pelides' *rage*, O Goddeſs, ſing,
wrath
Of all the woes *of Greece* the fatal ſpring,
Grecian

That ſtrew'd with *warriors* dead the Phrygian plain,
heroes

And *peopled the dark hell with heroes* ſlain;
fill'd the ſhady hell with chiefs untimely

Whoſe limbs, unburied on the naked
ſhore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures
tore,
Since great Achilles and Atrides ſtrove;
Such was the ſovereign doom, and ſuch
the will of Jove.

Whoſe limbs, unburied on the hoſtile ſhore,
Devouring dogs and greedy vultures tore,
Since firſt *Atrides* and *Achilles* ſtrove;
Such was the ſovereign doom, and ſuch the will
of Jove.

Declare, O Muſe, in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce ſtrife, from what of-
fended Power!

Latona's

Latona's ſon a dire contagion ſpread,
And heap'd the camp with mountains of the dead;
The King of Men his reverend prieſt defy'd,
And for the King's offence the people dy'd.

Declare, O Goddeſs, what offended Power
Enflam'd their *rage*, in that *ill-omen'd* hour;
anger fatal, hapleſs
Phœbus himſelf the *dire* debate procur'd,
fierce
T' avenge the wrongs his injur'd prieſt endur'd;
For this the God a dire infection ſpread,
And heap'd the camp with millions of the dead:
The King of Men the ſacred Sire defy'd,
And for the King's offence the people dy'd.

For

For Chryſes ſought with coſtly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the Victor's chain;
Suppliant the venerable Father ſtands,
Apollo's awful enſigns grace his hands,
By theſe he begs, and, lowly bending down,
Extends the ſceptre and the laurel crown.

For Chryſes ſought by *preſents to regain*
coſtly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the Victor's chain;
Suppliant the venerable Father ſtands,
Apollo's awful enſigns grac'd his hands,
By theſe he begs, and lowly bending down
The golden ſceptre and the laurel crown,
Preſents the ſceptre
For theſe as enſigns of his God he bare,
The God that ſends his golden ſhafts afar;

The

The low on earth, the venerable man,
Suppliant before the brother kings began.

He sued to all, but chief implor'd for
grace
The brother kings of Atreus' royal race;
Ye kings and warriors, may your vows
be crown'd,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with
the ground;
May Jove restore you, when your toils
are o'er,
Safe to the pleasures of your native
shore.

To all he sued, but chief implor'd for grace
The brother kings of Atreus' royal race.
Ye *sons of Atreus*, may your vows be crown'd,
Kings and warriors
Your labours, by the Gods be all your labours
crown'd;

So

So may the Gods your arms with conqueſt bleſs,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground;
Till *laid*
And crown your labours with deſerv'd ſucceſs;
May Jove reſtore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleaſures of your native ſhore.

But, oh! relieve a wretched parent's pain,
And give Chryſeis to theſe arms again;
If mercy fail, yet let my preſent move,
And dread avenging Phœbus, ſon of Jove.

But, oh! relieve a hapleſs parent's pain,
And give my daughter to theſe arms again;
Receive my gifts; if mercy fails, yet let my preſent move,
And fear *the God that deals his darts around,*
avenging Phœbus, ſon of Jove.

The Greeks, in ſhouts, their joint aſſent declare
The prieſt to reverence, and releaſe the fair.
Not ſo Atrides; he, with kingly pride,
Repuls'd the ſacred Sire, and thus reply'd.

He ſaid, the Greeks their joint aſſent declare,
The father ſaid, the gen'rous Greeks relent,
T' accept the ranſom, and releaſe the fair;
Revere the prieſt, and ſpeak their joint aſſent:
Not ſo *the tyrant*, he, with kingly pride,
Atrides
Repuls'd the ſacred Sire, and thus reply'd.

[Not ſo, the tyrant. DRYDEN.]

Of theſe lines, and of the whole firſt book, I am told that there was yet a former copy, more varied, and more deformed with interlineations.

The

The beginning of the ſecond book varies very little from the printed page, and is therefore ſet down without any parallel; the few ſlight differences do not require to be elaborately diſplayed.

Now pleaſing ſleep had ſeal'd each mortal eye;
Stretch'd in their tents the Grecian leaders lie;
Th' Immortals ſlumber'd on their thrones above,
All but the ever-watchful eye of Jove.
To honour Thetis' ſon he bends his care,
And plunge the Greeks in all the woes of war.

Then

Then bids an empty phantom rise to
fight,
And thus *commands* the vision of the night:
directs
Fly hence, delusive dream, and, light as
air,
To Agamemnon's royal tent repair;
Bid him in arms draw forth th' embattled
train,
March all his legions to the dusty plain.
Now tell the King 'tis given him to destroy
Declare ev'n now
The lofty *walls* of wide-extended Troy;
towers
For now no more the Gods with Fate
contend;
At Juno's suit the heavenly factions end.
Destruction *hovers* o'er yon devoted wall,
hangs
And nodding Ilium waits th' impending
fall.

Invocation to the Catalogue of Ships.

Say, Virgins, ſeated round the throne divine,
All-knowing Goddeſſes! immortal Nine!
Since earth's wide regions, heaven's unmeaſur'd height,
And hell's abyſs, hide nothing from your ſight,
(We, wretched mortals! loſt in doubts below,
But gueſs by rumour, and but boaſt we know)
Oh ſay what heroes, fir'd by thirſt of fame,
Or urg'd by wrongs, to Troy's deſtruction came!
To count them all, demands a thouſand tongues,
A throat of braſs and adamantine lungs.

Now,

Now, Virgin Goddeſſes, immortal Nine!
That round Olympus' heavenly ſummit ſhine,
Who ſee through heaven and earth, and hell profound,
And all things know, and all-things can refound;
Relate what armies fought the Trojan land,
What nations follow'd, and what chiefs command:
(For doubtful Fame diſtracts mankind below,
And nothing can we tell, and nothing know)
Without your aid, to count th' unnumber'd train,
A thouſand mouths, a thouſand tongues were vain.

Book V. v. 1.

But Pallas now Tydides' ſoul inſpires,
Fills with her force, and warms with all her fires:

Above the Greeks his deathleſs fame to raiſe,
And crown her hero with diſtinguiſh'd praiſe,
High on his helm celeſtial lightnings play,
His beamy ſhield emits a living ray;
Th' unwearied blaze inceſſant ſtreams ſupplies,
Like the red ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies.

But Pallas now Tydides' ſoul inſpires,
Fills with her *rage*, and warms with all her fires;
force
O'er all the Greeks decrees his fame to raiſe,
Above the Greeks *her warrior's* fame to raiſe,
his deathleſs
And crown her hero with *immortal* praiſe:
diſtinguiſh'd

Bright

Bright from his beamy *creſt* the lightnings play,
High on helm

From his broad buckler flaſh'd the living ray,
High on his helm celeſtial lightnings play,
His beamy ſhield emits a living ray.
The Goddeſs with her breath the flame ſupplies,
Bright as the ſtar whoſe fires in Autumn riſe;
Her breath divine thick ſtreaming flames ſupplies,
Bright as the ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies:
Th' unwearied blaze inceſſant ſtreams ſupplies,
Like the red ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies.

When firſt he rears his radiant orb to fight,
And bath'd in ocean ſhoots a keener light.
Such glories Pallas on the chief beſtow'd,
Such from his arms the fierce effulgence flow'd;

Onward ſhe drives him furious to engage,
Where the fight burns, and where the
thickeſt rage.

When freſh he rears his radiant orb to fight,
And gilds old Ocean with a blaze of light,
Bright as the ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies,
Freſh from the deep, and gilds the ſeas and ſkies.
Such glories Pallas on her chief beſtow'd,
Such ſparkling rays from his bright armour
flow'd.
Such from his arms the fierce effulgence flow'd.
Onward ſhe drives him *headlong* to engage,
furious
Where the *war bleeds*, and where the *fierceſt* rage.
fight burns thickeſt

The ſons of Dares firſt the combat fought,
A wealthy prieſt, but rich without a fault;

In

In Vulcan's fane the father's days were led,
The ſons to toils of glorious battle bred;

There liv'd a Trojan—Dares was his name,
The prieſt of Vulcan, rich, yet void of blame;
The ſons of Dares firſt the combat fought,
A wealthy prieſt, but rich without a fault.

Concluſion of Book VIII. *v.* 687.

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
O'er heaven's clear azure ſpreads her ſacred light;
When not a breath diſturbs the deep ſerene,
And not a cloud o'ercaſts the ſolemn ſcene;

Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And ſtars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole:
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure ſhed,
And tip with ſilver every mountain's head;
Then ſhine the vales—the rocks in proſpect riſe,
A flood of glory burſts from all the ſkies;
The conſcious ſwains, rejoicing in the ſight,
Eye the blue vault, and bleſs the uſeful light.
So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays;
The long reflexion of the diſtant fires
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the ſpires: A thou-

A thouſand piles the duſky horrors gild,
And ſhoot a ſhady luſtre o'er the field;
Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,
Whoſe umber'd arms by fits thick flaſhes ſend;
Loud neigh the courſers o'er their heaps of corn,
And ardent warriors wait the riſing morn.

As when in ſtillneſs of the ſilent night,
As when the moon in all her luſtre bright,
As when the moon refulgent lamp of night,
O'er heaven's *clear* azure *ſheds* her *ſilver* light;
pure ſpreads ſacred
As ſtill in air the trembling luſtre ſtood,
And o'er its golden border ſhoots a flood;
When *no looſe gale* diſturbs the deep ſerene,
not a breath
And *no dim* cloud o'erchaſts the ſolemn ſcene;
not a

Around her silver throne the planets glow,
And stars unnumber'd trembling beams bellow;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole:
Clear gleams of light o'er the dark trees are seen,
o'er the dark trees a yellow sheds,
O'er the dark trees a yellower *green* they shed,
gleam
verdure
And tip with silver all the *mountain* heads:
forest
And tip with silver every mountain's head.
The vallies open, and the forests rise,
The vales appear, the rocks in prospect rise,
Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
All Nature stands reveal'd before our eyes;
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies.
The conscious shepherd, joyful at the sight,
Eyes the blue vault, and numbers ev'ry light.
The conscious *swains rejoicing at the* sight,
shepherds gazing with delight

Eye

Eye the blue vault, and bleſs the *vivid* light.
glorious
useful

So many flames before *the navy* blaze,
proud Ilion

And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays,
Wide o'er the fields to Troy extend the gleams,
And tip the diſtant ſpires with fainter beams;
The long reflexions of the diſtant fires
Gild the high walls, and tremble on the ſpires,
Gleam on the walls, and tremple on the ſpires;
A thouſand fires at diſtant ſtations bright,
Gild the dark proſpect, and diſpel the night.

Of theſe ſpecimens every man who has cultivated poetry, or who delights to trace the mind from the rudeneſs of its firſt conceptions to the elegance of its laſt, will naturally deſire a greater number; but moſt other readers are already tired,

tired, and I am not writing only to poets and philoſophers.

The *Iliad* was publiſhed volume by volume, as the tranſlation proceeded; the firſt four books appeared in 1715. The expectation of this work was undoubtedly high, and every man who had connected his name with criticiſm or poetry, was deſirous of ſuch intelligence as might enable him to talk upon the popular topick. Halifax, who, by having been firſt a poet, and then a patron of poetry, had acquired the right of being a judge, was willing to hear ſome books while they were yet unpubliſhed. Of this rehearſal Pope afterwards gave the following account *.

* Spence.

"The

"The famous Lord Halifax was ra-
"ther a pretender to taſte than really
"poſſeſſed of it.—When I had finiſhed
"the two or three firſt books of my
"tranſlation of the *Iliad*, that Lord de-
"ſired to have the pleaſure of hearing
"them read at his houſe.—Addiſon,
"Congreve, and Garth, were there at
"the reading. In four or five places,
"Lord Halifax ſtopt me very civilly,
"and with a ſpeech each time, much
"of the ſame kind, 'I beg your par-
"don, Mr. Pope; but there is ſome-
"thing in that paſſage that does not
"quite pleaſe me.—Be ſo good as to
"mark the place, and conſider it a little
"at your leiſure.—I'm ſure you can
"give it a little turn.' I returned from

"Lord

" Lord Halifax's with Dr. Garth, in his
" chariot; and, as we were going along,
" was ſaying to the Doctor, that my
" Lord had laid me under a good deal
" of difficulty by ſuch looſe and general
" obſervations; that I had been think-
" ing over the paſſages almoſt ever ſince,
" and could not gueſs at what it was
" that offended his Lordſhip in either of
" them. Garth laughed heartily at my
" embarraſſment; ſaid, I had not been
" long enough acquainted with Lord
" Halifax to know his way yet; that I
" need not puzzle myſelf about look-
" ing thoſe places over and over, when
" I got home. ' All you need do (ſays
" he) is to leave them juſt as they are;
" call on Lord Halifax two or three
" months

"months hence, thank him for his kind "observations on those passages, and "then read them to him as altered. I "have known him much longer than "you have, and will be answerable for "the event." I followed his advice; "waited on Lord Halifax some time "after; said, I hoped he would find "his objections to those passages re- "moved; read them to him exactly as "they were at first: and his Lordship "was extremely pleased with them, and "cried out, *Ay, now they are perfectly* "*right: nothing can be better.*"

It is seldom that the great or the wise suspect that they are despised or cheated. Halifax, thinking this a lucky opportunity of securing immortality, made

ſome advances of favour and ſome overtures of advantage to Pope, which he ſeems to have received with ſullen coldneſs. All our knowledge of this tranſaction is derived from a ſingle Letter (Dec. 1, 1714), in which Pope ſays, "I am obliged to you, both for the favours you have done me, and thoſe "you intend me. I diſtruſt neither "your will nor your memory, when it "is to do good; and if I ever become "troubleſome or ſolicitous, it muſt not "be out of expectation, but out of gra"titude. Your Lordſhip may cauſe me "to live agreeably in the town, or con"tentedly in the country, which is real"ly all the difference I ſet between an "eaſy fortune and a ſmall one. It is

"indeed

"indeed a high ſtrain of generoſity in "you to think of making me eaſy all "my life, only becauſe I have been ſo "happy as to divert you ſome few "hours; but, if I may have leave to "add it is becauſe you think me no "enemy to my native country, there "will appear a better reaſon; for I "muſt of conſequence be very much "(as I ſincerely am) yours &c."

Theſe voluntary offers, and this faint acceptance, ended without effect. The patron was not accuſtomed to ſuch frigid gratitude, and the poet fed his own pride with the dignity of independence. They probably were ſuſpicious of each other. Pope would not dedicate till he ſaw at what rate his praiſe was valued;

he would be *troubleſome out of gratitude, not expectation.* Halifax thought himſelf entitled to confidence, and would give nothing, unleſs he knew what he ſhould receive. Their commerce had its beginning in hope of praiſe on one ſide, and of money on the other, and ended becauſe Pope was leſs eager of money than Halifax of praiſe. It is not likely that Halifax had any perſonal benevolence to Pope; it is evident that Pope looked on Halifax with ſcorn or hatred.

The reputation of this great work failed of gaining him a patron; but it deprived him of a friend. Addiſon and he were now at the head of poetry and criticiſm; and both in ſuch a ſtate of eleva-

elevation, that, like the two rivals in the Roman ſtate, one could no longer bear an equal, nor the other a ſuperior. Of the gradual abatement of kindneſs between friends, the beginning is often ſcarcely diſcernible by themſelves, and the proceſs is continued by petty provocations, and incivilities ſometimes peeviſhly returned, and ſometimes contemptuouſly neglected, which would eſcape all attention but that of pride, and drop from any memory but that of reſentment. That the quarrel of thoſe two wits ſhould be minutely deduced, is not to be expected from a writer to whom, as Homer ſays, *nothing but rumour has reached, and who has no perſonal knowledge.*

Pope doubtleſs approached Addiſon, when the reputation of their wit firſt brought them together, with the reſpect due to a man whoſe abilities were acknowledged, and who, having attained that eminence to which he was himſelf aſpiring, had in his hands the diſtribution of literary fame. He paid court with ſufficient diligence by his Prologue to *Cato*, by his abuſe of Dennis, and, with praiſe yet more direct, by his poem on the *Dialogues on Medals*, of which the immediate publication was then intended. In all this there was no hypocriſy; for he confeſſed that he found in Addiſon ſomething more pleaſing than in any other man.

It

It may be ſuppoſed, that as Pope ſaw himſelf favoured by the world, and more frequently compared his own powers with thoſe of others, his confidence increaſed, and his ſubmiſſion leſſened; and that Addiſon felt no delight from the advances of a young wit, who might ſoon contend with him for the higheſt place. Every great man, of whatever kind be his greatneſs, has among his friends thoſe who officiouſly, or inſidiouſly, quicken his attention to offences, heighten his diſguſt, and ſtimulate his reſentment. Of ſuch adherents Addiſon doubtleſs had many, and Pope was now too high to be without them.

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From the emiſſion and reception of the Propoſals for the *Iliad*, the kindneſs of Addiſon ſeems to have abated. Jervas the painter once pleaſed himſelf (Aug. 20, 1714) with imagining that he had re-eſtabliſhed their friendſhip; and wrote to Pope that Addiſon once ſuſpected him of too cloſe a confederacy with Swift, but was now ſatisfied with his conduct. To this Pope anſwered, a week after, that his engagements to Swift were ſuch as his ſervices in regard to the ſubſcription demanded, and that the Tories never put him under the neceſſity of aſking leave to be grateful. *But*, ſays he, *as Mr. Addiſon muſt be* the judge *in what regards himſelf, and ſeems to have no very juſt one in regard to me, ſo I muſt*

own

own to you I expect nothing but civility from him. In the ſame Letter he mentions Phillips, as having been buſy to kindle animoſity between them; but, in a Letter to Addiſon, he expreſſes ſome conſciouſneſs of behaviour, inattentively deficient in reſpect.

Of Swift's induſtry in promoting the ſubſcription there remains the teſtimony of Kennet, no friend to either him or Pope.

"Nov. 2, 1713, Dr. Swift came into "the coffee-houſe, and had a bow from "every body but me, who, I confeſs, "could not but deſpiſe him. When I "came to the anti-chamber to wait, be"fore prayers, Dr. Swift was the prin"cipal man of talk and buſineſs, and

" acted as maſter of requeſts.—Then he " inſtructed a young nobleman that the " *beſt Poet in England* was *Mr. Pope* (a " papiſt), who had begun a tranſlation " of *Homer* into Engliſh verſe, for which " *he muſt have them all ſubſcribe*; for, " ſays he, the author *ſhall not* begin to " print till *I have* a thouſand guineas " for him."

About this time it is likely that Steele, who was, with all his political fury, good-natured and officious, procured an interview between theſe angry rivals, which ended in aggravated malevolence. On this occaſion, if the reports be true, Pope made his complaint with frankneſs and ſpirit, as a man undeſervedly neglected or oppoſed; and

Addi-

Addiſon affected a contemptuous unconcern, and, in a calm even voice, reproached Pope with his vanity, and telling him of the improvements which his early works had received from his own remarks and thoſe of Steele, ſaid, that he, being now engaged in publick buſineſs, had no longer any care for his poetical reputation; nor had any other deſire, with regard to Pope, than that his ſhould not, by too much arrogance, alienate the publick.

To this Pope is ſaid to have replied with great keenneſs and ſeverity, upbraiding Addiſon with perpetual dependance, and with the abuſe of thoſe qualifications which he had obtained at the publick coſt, and charging him with

mean endeavours to obſtruct the progreſs of riſing merit. The conteſt roſe ſo high, that they parted at laſt without any interchange of civility.

The firſt volume of *Homer* was (1715) in time publiſhed; and a rival verſion of the firſt *Iliad*, for rivals the time of their appearance inevitably made them, was immediately printed, with the name of Tickell. It was ſoon perceived that, among the followers of Addiſon, Tickell had the preference, and the criticks and poets divided into factions. *I*, ſays Pope, *have the town, that is, the mob, on my ſide; but it is not uncommon for the ſmaller party to ſupply by induſtry what it wants in numbers.—I appeal to the people as my rightful judges, and, while they are not*

inclined to condemn me, ſhall not fear the high-flyers at Button's. This oppoſition he immediately imputed to Addiſon, and complained of it in terms ſufficiently reſentful to Craggs, their common friend.

When Addiſon's opinion was aſked, he declared the verſions to be both good, but Tickell's the beſt that ever had been written; and ſometimes ſaid that they were both good, but that Tickell had more of *Homer*.

Pope was now ſufficiently irritated; his reputation and his intereſt were at hazard. He once intended to print together the four verſions of Dryden, Maynwaring, Pope, and Tickell, that they might be readily compared, and

fairly

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fairly

fairly eſtimated. This deſign ſeems to have been defeated by the refuſal of Tonſon, who was the proprietor of the other three verſions.

Pope intended at another time a rigorous criticiſm of Tickell's tranſlation, and had marked a copy, which I have ſeen, in all places that appeared defective. But while he was thus meditating defence or revenge, his adverſary ſunk before him without a blow; the voice of the publick was not long ſuſpended, and the preference was univerſally given to Pope's performance.

He was convinced, by adding one circumſtance to another, that the other tranſlation was the work of Addiſon himſelf; but if he knew it in Addiſon's life-

life-time, it does not appear that he told it. He left his illuſtrious antagoniſt to be puniſhed by what has been conſidered as the moſt painful of all reflections, the remembrance of a crime perpetrated in vain.

The other circumſtances of their quarrel were thus related by Pope *.

"Philips ſeemed to have been encouraged to abuſe me in coffee-houſes, and converſations: and Gildon wrote a thing about Wycherley, in which he had abuſed both me and my relations very groſly. Lord Warwick himſelf told me one day, that it was in vain for me to endeavour to be well with Mr. Addiſon; that his jealous

* Spence.

"temper

" temper would never admit of a ſettled
" friendſhip between us: and, to con-
" vince me of what he had ſaid, aſſured
" me, that Addiſon had encouraged
" Gildon to publiſh thoſe ſcandals, and
" had given him ten guineas after they
" were publiſhed. The next day, while
" I was heated with what I had heard,
" I wrote a Letter to Mr. Addiſon, to
" let him know that I was not unac-
" quainted with this behaviour of his;
" that if I was to ſpeak ſeverely of him,
" in return for it, it ſhould be in ſuch
" a dirty way, that I ſhould rather tell
" him, himſelf, fairly of his faults,
" and allow his good qualities; and
" that it ſhould be ſomething in the
" following manner: I then adjoined

" the

"the firſt ſketch of what has ſince been "called my ſatire on Addiſon. Mr. "Addiſon uſed me very civilly ever "after."

The verſes on Addiſon, when they were ſent to Atterbury, were conſidered by him as the moſt excellent of Pope's performances; and the writer was adviſed, ſince he knew where his ſtrength lay, not to ſuffer it to remain unemployed.

This year (1715) being, by the ſubſcription, enabled to live more by choice, having perſuaded his father to ſell their eſtate at Binfield, he purchaſed, I think only for his life, that houſe at Twickenham to which his reſidence afterwards procured ſo much celebration, and removed

moved thither with his father and mother.

Here he planted the vines and the quincunx which his verſes mention; and being under the neceſſity of making a ſubterraneous paſſage to a garden on the other ſide of the road, he adorned it with foſſile bodies, and dignified it with the title of a grotto; a place of ſilence and retreat, from which he endeavoured to perſuade his friends and himſelf that cares and paſſions could be excluded.

A grotto is not often the wiſh or pleaſure of an Engliſhman, who has more frequent need to ſolicit than exclude the ſun; but Pope's excavation was requiſite as an entrance to his garden, and, as ſome men try to be proud

of

of their defects, he extracted an ornament from an inconvenience, and vanity produced a grotto where neceſſity enforced a paſſage. It may be frequently remarked of the ſtudious and ſpeculative, that they are proud of trifles, and that their amuſements ſeem frivolous and childiſh; whether it be that men conſcious of great reputation think themſelves above the reach of cenſure, and ſafe in the admiſſion of negligent indulgences, or that mankind expect from elevated genius an uniformity of greatneſs, and watch its degradation with malicious wonder; like him who having followed with his eye an eagle into the clouds, ſhould lament that ſhe ever deſcended to a perch.

While

While the volumes of his *Homer* were annually published, he collected his former works (1717) into one quarto volume, to which he prefixed a Preface, written with great ſpritelineſs and elegance, which was afterwards reprinted, with ſome paſſages ſubjoined that he at firſt omitted; other marginal additions of the ſame kind he made in the later editions of his poems. Waller remarks, that poets loſe half their praiſe, becauſe the reader knows not what they have blotted. Pope's voracity of fame taught him the art of obtaining the accumulated honour both of what he had publiſhed, and of what he had ſuppreſſed.

In this year his father died ſuddenly, in his ſeventy-fifth year, having paſſed twenty-

twenty-nine years in privacy. He is not known but by the character which his ſon has given him. If the money with which he retired was all gotten by himſelf, he had traded very ſucceſsfully in times when ſudden riches were rarely attainable.

The publication of the *Iliad* was at laſt completed in 1720. The ſplendor and ſucceſs of this work raiſed Pope many enemies, that endeavoured to depreciate his abilities; Burnet, who was afterwards a Judge of no mean reputation, cenſured him in a piece called *Homerides* before it was publiſhed; Ducket likewiſe endeavoured to make him ridiculous. Dennis was the perpetual perſecutor of all his ſtudies. But, who-

ever his criticks were, their writings are loſt, and the names which are preſerved are preſerved in the *Dunciad.*

In this diſaſtrous year (1720) of national infatuation, when more riches than Peru can boaſt were expected from the South Sea, when the contagion of avarice tainted every mind, and even poets panted after wealth, Pope was ſeized with the univerſal paſſion, and ventured ſome of his money. The ſtock roſe in its price; and he for a while thought himſelf *the Lord of Thouſands.* But this dream of happineſs did not laſt long, and he ſeems to have waked ſoon enough to get clear with the loſs only of what he once thought himſelf to have won, and perhaps not wholly of that.

Next

Next year he publiſhed ſome ſelect poems of his friend Dr. Parnell, with a very elegant Dedication to the Earl of Oxford; who, after all his ſtruggles and dangers, then lived in retirement, ſtill under the frown of a victorious faction, who could take no pleaſure in hearing his praiſe.

He gave the ſame year (1721) an edition of *Shakeſpeare*. His name was now of ſo much authority, that Tonſon thought himſelf entitled, by annexing it, to demand a ſubſcription of ſix guineas for Shakeſpeare's plays in ſix quarto volumes; nor did his expectation much deceive him; for of ſeven hundred and fifty which he printed, he diſperſed a great number at the price propoſed.

The reputation of that edition indeed ſunk afterwards ſo low, that one hundred and forty copies were ſold at ſixteen ſhillings each.

On this undertaking, to which Pope was induced by a reward of two hundred and ſeventeen pounds twelve ſhillings, he ſeems never to have reflected afterwards without vexation; for Theobald, a man of heavy diligence, with very ſlender powers, firſt, in a book called *Shakeſpeare Reſtored*, and then in a formal edition, detected his deficiencies with all the inſolence of victory; and, as he was now high enough to be feared and hated, Theobald had from others all the help that could be ſupplied, by the deſire of humbling a haughty character.

From

From this time Pope became an enemy to editors, collaters, commentators, and verbal criticks; and hoped to perſuade the world, that he miſcarried in this undertaking only by having a mind too great for ſuch minute employment.

Pope in his edition undoubtedly did many things wrong, and left many things undone; but let him not be defrauded of his due praiſe. He was the firſt that knew, at leaſt the firſt that told, by what helps the text might be improved. If he inſpected the early editions negligently, he taught others to be more accurate. In his Preface he expanded, with great ſkill and elegance, the character which had been given of Shakeſpeare by Dryden; and he drew

the publick attention upon his works, which, though often mentioned, had been little read.

Soon after the appearance of the *Iliad*, reſolving not to let the general kindneſs cool, he publiſhed propoſals for a tranſlation of the *Odyſſey*, in five volumes, for five guineas. He was willing, however, now to have aſſociates in his labour, being either weary with toiling upon another's thoughts, or having heard, as Ruffhead relates, that Fenton and Broome had already begun the work, and liking better to have them confederates than rivals.

In the patent, inſtead of ſaying that he had *tranſlated* the *Odyſſey*, as he had ſaid of the *Iliad*, he ſays that he had *under-*

undertaken a tranſlation; and in the propoſals the ſubſcription is ſaid to be not ſolely for his own uſe, but for that of *two of his friends who have aſſiſted him in this work.*

In 1723, while he was engaged in this new verſion, he appeared before the Lords at the memorable trial of Biſhop Atterbury, with whom he had lived in great familiarity, and frequent correſpondence. Atterbury had honeſtly recommended to him the ſtudy of the popiſh controverſy, in hope of his converſion; to which Pope anſwered in a manner that cannot much recommend his principles, or his judgement. In queſtions and projects of learning, they agreed better. He was called at the trial to give an account

of Atterbury's domeſtick life, and private employment, that it might appear how little time he had left for plots. Pope had but few words to utter, and in thoſe few he made ſeveral blunders.

His Letters to Atterbury expreſs the utmoſt eſteem, tenderneſs, and gratitude: *perhaps*, ſays he, *it is not only in this world that I may have cauſe to remember the Biſhop of Rocheſter.* At their laſt interview in the Tower, Atterbury preſented him with a Bible.

Of the *Odyſſey* Pope tranſlated only twelve books; the reſt were the work of Broome and Fenton: the notes were written wholly by Broome, who was not over-liberally rewarded. The Publick was carefully kept ignorant of the ſeveral

veral ſhares; and an account was ſubjoined at the concluſion, which is now known not to be true.

The firſt copy of Pope's books, with thoſe of Fenton, are to be ſeen in the Muſeum. The parts of Pope are leſs interlined than the *Iliad*, and the latter books of the *Iliad* leſs than the former. He grew dexterous by practice, and every ſheet enabled him to write the next with more facility. The books of Fenton have very few alterations by the hand of Pope. Thoſe of Broome have not been found; but Pope complained, as it is reported, that he had much trouble in correcting them.

His contract with Lintot was the ſame as for the *Iliad*, except that only one

one hundred pounds were to be paid him for each volume. The number of ſubſcribers was five hundred and ſeventy-four, and of copies eight hundred and nineteen; ſo that his profit, when he had paid his aſſiſtants, was ſtill very conſiderable. The work was finiſhed in 1725, and from that time he reſolved to make no more tranſlations.

The ſale did not anſwer Lintot's expectation, and he then pretended to diſcover ſomething of fraud in Pope, and commenced, or threatened, a ſuit in Chancery.

On the Engliſh *Odyſſey* a criticiſm was publiſhed by Spence, at that time Prelector of Poetry at Oxford; a man whoſe learning was not very great, and whoſe mind

mind was not very powerful. His criticiſm, however, was commonly juſt, what he thought, he thought rightly; and his remarks were recommended by his coolneſs and candour. In him Pope had the firſt experience of a critick without malevolence, who thought it as much his duty to diſplay beauties as expoſe faults; who cenſured with reſpect, and praiſed with alacrity.

With this criticiſm Pope was ſo little offended, that he ſought the acquaintance of the writer, who lived with him from that time in great familiarity, attended him in his laſt hours, and compiled memorials of his converſation. The regard of Pope recommended him to the great and powerful, and he obtained

tained very valuable preferments in the Church.

Not long after Pope was returning home from a visit in a friend's coach, which, in passing a bridge, was overturned into the water; the windows were closed, and being unable to force them open, he was in danger of immediate death, when the postilion snatched him out by breaking the glass, of which the fragments cut two of his fingers in such a manner, that he lost their use.

Voltaire, who was then in England, sent him a Letter of Consolation. He had been entertained by Pope at his table, where he talked with so much grossness that Mrs. Pope was driven from

from the room. Pope diſcovered, by a trick, that he was a ſpy for the Court, and never conſidered him as a man worthy of confidence.

He ſoon afterwards (1727) joined with Swift, who was then in England, to publiſh three volumes of Miſcellanies, in which amongſt other things he inſerted the *Memoirs of a Pariſh Clerk*, in ridicule of Burnet's importance in his own Hiſtory, and a *Debate upon Black and White Horſes*, written in all the formalities of a legal proceſs by the aſſiſtance, as is ſaid, of Mr. Forteſcue, afterwards Maſter of the Rolls. Before theſe Miſcellanies is a preface ſigned by Swift and Pope, but apparently written by Pope; in which he makes a ridiculous

lous and romantick complaint of the robberies committed upon authors by the clandeſtine ſeizure and ſale of their papers. He tells, in tragick ſtrains, how *the cabinets of the Sick and the cloſets of the Dead have been broke open and ranſacked*; as if thoſe violences were often committed for papers of uncertain and accidental value, which are rarely provoked by real treaſures; as if epigrams and eſſays were in danger where gold and diamonds are ſafe. A cat, hunted for his muſk, is, according to Pope's account, but the emblem of a wit winded by bookſellers.

His complaint, however, received ſome atteſtation; for the ſame year the Letters written by him to Mr. Cromwell, in

his

his youth, were ſold by Mrs. Thomas to Curll, who printed them.

In theſe Miſcellanies was firſt publiſhed the *Art of Sinking in Poetry*, which, by ſuch a train of conſequences as uſually paſſes in literary quarrels, gave in a ſhort time, according to Pope's account, occaſion to the *Dunciad*.

In the following year (1728) he began to put Atterbury's advice in practice; and ſhewed his ſatirical powers by publiſhing the *Dunciad*, one of his greateſt and moſt elaborate performances, in which he endeavoured to ſink into contempt all the writers by whom he had been attacked, and ſome others whom he thought unable to defend themſelves.

At

At the head of the Dunces he placed poor Theobald, whom he accuſed of ingratitude; but whoſe real crime was ſuppoſed to be that of having reviſed *Shakeſpeare* more happily than himſelf. This ſatire had the effect which he intended, by blaſting the characters which it touched. Ralph, who, unneceſſarily interpoſing in the quarrel, got a place in a ſubſequent edition, complained that for a time he was in danger of ſtarving, as the bookſellers had no longer any confidence in his capacity.

The prevalence of this poem was gradual and ſlow: the plan, if not wholly new, was little underſtood by common readers. Many of the alluſions required illuſtration; the names were often ex-

preſſed only by the initial and final letters, and, if they had been printed at length, were ſuch as few had known or recollected. The ſubject itſelf had nothing generally intereſting, for whom did it concern to know that one or another ſcribler was a dunce? If therefore it had been poſſible for thoſe who were attacked to conceal their pain and their reſentment, the *Dunciad* might have made its way very ſlowly in the world.

This, however, was not to be expected: every man is of importance to himſelf, and therefore, in his own opinion, to others; and, ſuppoſing the world already acquainted with all his pleaſures and his pains, is perhaps the firſt to

publiſh injuries or misfortunes, which had never been known unleſs related by himſelf, and at which thoſe that hear them will only laugh; for no man ſympathiſes with the ſorrows of vanity.

The hiſtory of the *Dunciad* is very minutely related by Pope himſelf, in a Dedication which he wrote to Lord Middleſex in the name of Savage.

"I will relate the war of the *Dunces* "(for ſo it has been commonly called), "which began in the year 1727, and "ended in 1730.

"When Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope "thought it proper, for reaſons ſpeci- "fied in the Preface to their Miſcella- "nies, to publiſh ſuch little pieces of "theirs as had caſually got abroad,

"there

" there was added to them the *Treatiſe*
" *of the Bathos*, or the *Art of Sinking in*
" *Poetry*. It happened that in one chap-
" ter of this piece the ſeveral ſpecies of
" bad poets were ranged in claſſes, to
" which were prefixed almoſt all the
" letters of the alphabet (the greateſt
" part of them at random); but ſuch
" was the number of poets eminent in
" that art, that ſome one or other took
" every letter to himſelf: all fell into
" ſo violent a fury, that, for half a year
" or more, the common newſpapers (in
" moſt of which they had ſome proper-
" ty, as being hired writers) were filled
" with the moſt abuſive falſhoods and
" ſcurrilities they could poſſibly deviſe.
" A liberty no way to be wondered at

" in thoſe people, and in thoſe papers,
" that for many years, during the un-
" controuled licenſe of the preſs, had
" aſperſed almoſt all the great charac-
" ters of the age; and this with impu-
" nity, their own perſons and names
" being utterly ſecret and obſcure.

" This gave Mr. Pope the thought,
" that he had now ſome opportunity of
" doing good, by detecting and dragging
" into light theſe common enemies of
" mankind; ſince, to invalidate this
" univerſal ſlander, it ſufficed to ſhew
" what contemptible men were the au-
" thors of it. He was not without
" hopes, that, by manifeſting the dull-
" neſs of thoſe who had only malice to
" recommend them, either the book-
" ſellers

" ſellers would not find their account in " employing them, or the men themſelves, when diſcovered, want courage " to proceed in ſo unlawful an occupation. This it was that gave birth to " the *Dunciad*; and he thought it an " happineſs, that, by the late flood of " ſlander on himſelf, he had acquired " ſuch a peculiar right over their names " as was neceſſary to this deſign.

" On the 12th of March, 1729, at " St. James's, that poem was preſented " to the King and Queen (who had before been pleaſed to read it) by the " right honourable Sir Robert Walpole: and ſome days after the whole " impreſſion was taken and diſperſed by

" ſeveral noblemen and perſons of the " firſt diſtinction.

" It is certainly a true obſervation, " that no people are ſo impatient of " cenſure as thoſe who are the greateſt " ſlanderers, which was wonderfully " exemplified on this occaſion. On the " day the book was firſt vended, a " crowd of authors beſieged the ſhop; " intreaties, advices, threats of law and " battery, nay cries of treaſon, were all " employed to hinder the coming-out " of the *Dunciad:* on the other ſide, " the bookſellers and hawkers made as " great efforts to procure it. What " could a few poor authors do againſt " ſo great a majority as the publick?

" There

" There was no ſtopping a torrent with " a finger, ſo out it came.

" Many ludicrous circumſtances at- " tended it. The *Dunces* (for by this " name they were called) held weekly " clubs, to conſult of hoſtilities againſt " the author: one wrote a Letter to a " great miniſter, aſſuring him Mr. Pope " was the greateſt enemy the govern- " ment had; and another bought his " image in clay, to execute him in " effigy, with which ſad ſort of ſatisfac- " tions the gentlemen were a little com- " forted.

" Some falſe editions of the book " having an owl in their frontiſpiece, " the true one, to diſtinguiſh it, fixed in " its ſtead an aſs laden with authors.

" Then another ſurreptitious one being
" printed with the ſame aſs, the new
" edition in octavo returned for diſtinc-
" tion to the owl again. Hence aroſe
" a great conteſt of bookſellers againſt
" bookſellers, and advertiſements againſt
" advertiſements; ſome recommending
" the edition of the owl, and others the
" edition of the aſs; by which names
" they came to be diſtinguiſhed, to the
" great honour alſo of the gentlemen of
" the *Dunciad*."

Pope appears by this narrative to have contemplated his victory over the *Dunces* with great exultation; and ſuch was his delight in the tumult which he had raiſed, that for a while his natural ſenſibility was ſuſpended, and he read reproaches

proaches and invectives without emotion, conſidering them only as the neceſſary effects of that pain which he rejoiced in having given.

It cannot however be concealed that, by his own confeſſion, he was the aggreſſor; for nobody believes that the letters in the *Bathos* were placed at random; and it may be diſcovered that, when he thinks himſelf concealed, he indulges the common vanity of common men, and triumphs in thoſe diſtinctions which he had affected to deſpiſe. He is proud that his book was preſented to the King and Queen by the right honourable Sir Robert Walpole; he is proud that they had read it before; he is proud that the edition was taken off

by

by the nobility and perſons of the firſt diſtinction.

The edition of which he ſpeaks was, I believe, that, which by telling in the text the names and in the notes the characters of thoſe whom he had ſatiriſed, was made intelligible and diverting. The criticks had now declared their approbation of the plan, and the common reader began to like it without fear; thoſe who were ſtrangers to petty literature, and therefore unable to decypher initials and blanks, had now names and perſons brought within their view; and delighted in the viſible effect of thoſe ſhafts of malice, which they had hitherto contemplated, as ſhot into the air.

Dennis,

Dennis, upon the freſh provocation now given him, renewed the enmity which had for a time been appeaſed by mutual civilities; and publiſhed remarks, which he had till then ſuppreſſed, upon the *Rape of the Lock*. Many more grumbled in ſecret, or vented their reſentment in the newſpapers by epigrams or invectives.

Ducket, indeed, being mentioned as loving Burnet with *pious paſſion*, pretended that his moral character was injured, and for ſome time declared his reſolution to take vengeance with a cudgel. But Pope appeaſed him, by changing *pious paſſion* to *cordial friendſhip*, and by a note, in which he vehemently

mently diſclaims the malignity of meaning imputed to the firſt expreſſion.

Aaron Hill, who was repreſented as diving for the prize, expoſtulated with Pope in a manner ſo much ſuperior to all mean ſolicitation, that Pope was reduced to ſneak and ſhuffle, ſometimes to deny, and ſometimes to apologiſe; he firſt endeavours to wound, and is then afraid to own that he meant a blow.

The *Dunciad*, in the complete edition, is addreſſed to Dr. Swift: of the notes, part was written by Dr. Arbuthnot, and an apologetical Letter was prefixed, ſigned by Cleland, but ſuppoſed to have been written by Pope.

After this general war upon dulneſs, he ſeems to have indulged himſelf awhile

in

in tranquillity; but his ſubſequent productions prove that he was not idle. He publiſhed (1731) a poem on *Taſte*, in which he very particularly and ſeverely criticiſes the houſe, the furniture, the gardens, and the entertainments of *Timon*, a man of great wealth and little taſte. By *Timon* he was univerſally ſuppoſed, and by the Earl of Burlington, to whom the poem is addreſſed, was privately ſaid, to mean the Duke of Chandos; a man perhaps too much delighted with pomp and ſhow, but of a temper kind and beneficent, and who had conſequently the voice of the publick in his favour.

A violent outcry was therefore raiſed againſt the ingratitude and treachery of

Pope, who was ſaid to have been indebted to the patronage of Chandos for a preſent of a thouſand pounds, and who gained the opportunity of inſulting him by the kindneſs of his invitation.

The receipt of the thouſand pounds Pope publickly denied; but from the reproach which the attack on a character ſo amiable brought upon him, he tried all means of eſcaping. The name of Cleland was again employed in an apology, by which no man was ſatisfied; and he was at laſt reduced to ſhelter his temerity behind diſſimulation, and endeavour to make that diſbelieved which he never had confidence openly to deny. He wrote an exculpatory Letter to the Duke, which was anſwered

with great magnanimity, as by a man who accepted his excuſe without believing his profeſſions. He ſaid, that to have ridiculed his taſte, or his buildings, had been an indifferent action in another man; but that in Pope, after the reciprocal kindneſs that had been exchanged between them, it had been leſs eaſily excuſed.

Pope, in one of his Letters, complaining of the treatment which his poem had found, *owns that ſuch criticks can intimidate him, nay almoſt perſuade him to write no more, which is a compliment this age deſerves.* The man who threatens the world is always ridiculous; for the world can eaſily go on without him, and in a ſhort time will

ceaſe

ceaſe to miſs him. I have heard of an ideot, who uſed to revenge his vexations by lying all night upon the bridge. *There is nothing*, ſays Juvenal, *that a man will not believe in his own favour.* Pope had been flattered till he thought himſelf one of the moving powers in the ſyſtem of life. When he talked of laying down his pen, thoſe who ſat round him intreated and implored, and ſelf-love did not ſuffer him to ſuſpect that they went away and laughed.

The following year deprived him of Gay, a man whom he had known early, and whom he ſeemed to love with more tenderneſs than any other of his literary friends. Pope was now forty-four years old;

old; an age at which the mind begins leſs eaſily to admit new confidence, and the will, to grow leſs flexible, and when therefore the departure of an old friend is very acutely felt.

In the next year, he loſt his mother, not by an unexpected death, for ſhe had laſted to the age of ninety-three; but ſhe did not die unlamented. The filial piety of Pope was in the higheſt degree amiable and exemplary; his parents had the happineſs of living till he was at the ſummit of poetical reputation, till he was at eaſe in his fortune, and without a rival in his fame, and found no diminution of his reſpect or tenderneſs. Whatever was his pride, to them he was obedient; and whatever was his

irritability, to them he was gentle. Life has, among its ſoothing and quiet comforts, few things better to give than ſuch a ſon.

One of the paſſages of Pope's life, which ſeems to deſerve ſome enquiry, was a publication of Letters between him and many of his friends, which falling into the hands of *Curll*, a rapacious bookſeller of no good fame, were by him printed and ſold. This volume containing ſome Letters from noblemen, Pope incited a proſecution againſt him in the Houſe of Lords for breach of privilege, and attended himſelf to ſtimulate the reſentment of his friends. *Curll* appeared at the bar, and, knowing himſelf in no great danger,

ger, ſpoke of Pope with very little reverence. *He has*, ſaid Curll, *a knack at verſifying; but in proſe I think myſelf a match for him.* When the orders of the Houſe were examined, none of them appeared to have been infringed; Curll went away triumphant, and Pope was left to ſeek ſome other remedy.

Curll's account was, that one evening a man in a clergyman's gown, but with a lawyer's band, brought and offered to ſale a number of printed volumes, which he found to be Pope's epiſtolary correſpondence; that he aſked no name, and was told none, but gave the price demanded; and thought himſelf authoriſed to uſe his purchaſe to his own advantage.

That Curll gave a true account of the tranſaction, it is reaſonable to believe, becauſe no falſhood was ever detected; and when ſome years afterwards I mentioned it to Lintot, the ſon of Bernard, he declared his opinion to be, that Pope knew better than any body elſe how Curll obtained the copies, becauſe another parcel was at the ſame time ſent to himſelf, for which no price had ever been demanded, as he made known his reſolution not to pay a porter, and conſequently not to deal with a nameleſs agent.

Such care had been taken to make them publick, that they were ſent at once to two bookſellers; to Curll, who was likely to ſeize them as a prey, and to Lintot,

tot, who might be expected to give Pope information of the ſeeming injury. Lintot, I believe, did nothing; and Curll did what was expected. That to make them publick was the only purpoſe may be reaſonably ſuppoſed, becauſe the numbers offered to ſale by the private meſſengers ſhewed that hope of gain could not have been the motive of the impreſſion.

It ſeems that Pope, being deſirous of printing his Letters, and not knowing how to do, without imputation of vanity, what has in this country been done very rarely, contrived an appearance of compulſion; that when he could complain that his Letters were ſurreptitiouſly publiſhed, he might de-

cently and defenſively publiſh them himſelf.

Pope's private correſpondence thus promulgated, filled the nation with praiſes of his candour, tenderneſs, and benevolence, the purity of his purpoſes, and the fidelity of his friendſhip. There were ſome Letters which a very good or a very wiſe man would wiſh ſuppreſſed; but, as they had been already expoſed, it was impracticable now to retract them.

From the peruſal of thoſe Letters, Mr. Allen firſt conceived the deſire of knowing him; and with ſo much zeal did he cultivate the friendſhip which he had newly formed, that when Pope told his purpoſe of vindicating his own property

perty by a genuine edition, he offered to pay the coſt.

This however Pope did not accept; but in time ſolicited a ſubſcription for a Quarto volume, which appeared (1737), I believe, with ſufficient profit. In the Preface he tells that his Letters were repoſited in a friend's library, ſaid to be the Earl of Oxford's, and that the copy thence ſtolen was ſent to the preſs. The ſtory was doubtleſs received with different degrees of credit. It may be ſuſpected that the Preface to the Miſcellanies was written to prepare the publick for ſuch an incident; and to ſtrengthen this opinion, James Worſdale, a painter, who was employed in clandeſtine negotiations, but whoſe vera-

city was very doubtful, declared that he was the meſſenger who carried, by Pope's direction, the books to Curll.

When they were thus publiſhed and avowed, as they had relation to recent facts, and perſons either then living or not yet forgotten, they may be ſuppoſed to have found readers; but as the facts were minute, and the characters being either private or literary, were little known, or little regarded, they awakened no popular kindneſs or reſentment: the book never became much the ſubject of converſation; ſome read it as contemporary hiſtory, and ſome perhaps as a model of epiſtolary language; but thoſe who read it did not talk of it. Not much therefore was added by it to fame or

envy;

envy; nor do I remember that it produced either publick praiſe, or publick cenſure.

It had however, in ſome degree, the recommendation of novelty. Our language has few Letters, except thoſe of ſtateſmen. Howel indeed, about a century ago, publiſhed his Letters, which are commended by *Morhoff*, and which alone of his hundred volumes continue his memory. Loveday's Letters were printed only once; thoſe of Herbert and Suckling are hardly known. Mrs. Phillips's [*Orinda's*] are equally neglected; and thoſe of Walſh ſeem written as exerciſes, and were never ſent to any living miſtreſs or friend. Pope's epiſtolary excellence had an open field; he had

had no Engliſh rival, living or dead.

Pope is ſeen in this collection as connected with the other contemporary wits, and certainly ſuffers no diſgrace in the compariſon; but it muſt be remembered that he had the power of favouring himſelf: he might have originally had publication in his mind, and have written with care, or have afterwards ſelected thoſe which he had moſt happily conceived, or moſt diligently laboured; and I know not whether there does not appear ſomething more ſtudied and artificial in his productions than the reſt, except one long Letter by Bolingbroke, compoſed with all the ſkill and induſtry of a profeſſed author. It is indeed not eaſy to diſtinguiſh affectation

reputation from habit; he that has once ſtudiouſly formed a ſtyle, rarely writes afterwards with complete eaſe. Pope may be ſaid to write always with his reputation in his head; Swift perhaps like a man who remembered that he was writing to Pope; but Arbuthnot like one who lets his thoughts drop from his pen as they riſe into his mind.

Before theſe Letters appeared, he publiſhed the firſt part of what he perſuaded himſelf to think a ſyſtem of Ethicks, under the title of an *Eſſay on Man*; which, if his Letter to Swift (of Sept. 14, 1725) be rightly explained by the commentator, had been eight years under his conſideration, and of which he ſeems to have deſired the ſucceſs with

great

great ſolicitude. He had now many open, and doubtleſs many ſecret enemies. The *Dunces* were yet ſmarting with the war; and the ſuperiority which he publickly arrogated, diſpoſed the world to wiſh his humiliation.

All this he knew, and againſt all this he provided. His own name, and that of his friend to whom the work is inſcribed, were in the firſt editions carefully ſuppreſſed; and the poem, being of a new kind, was aſcribed to one or another, as favour determined, or conjecture wandered; it was given, ſays Warburton, to every man, except him only who could write it. Thoſe who like only when they like the author, and who are under the dominion of a name, con-

condemned it; and thoſe admired it who are willing to ſcatter praiſe at random, which while it is unappropriated excites no envy. Thoſe friends of Pope, that were truſted with the ſecret, went about laviſhing honours on the new-born poet, and hinting that Pope was never ſo much in danger from any former rival.

To thoſe authors whom he had perſonally offended, and to thoſe whoſe opinion the world conſidered as deciſive, and whom he ſuſpected of envy or malevolence, he ſent his eſſay as a preſent before publication, that they might defeat their own enmity by praiſes, which they could not afterwards decently retract.

With

With theſe precautions, in 1733 was publiſhed the firſt part of the *Eſſay on Man*. There had been for ſome time a report that Pope was buſy upon a Syſtem of Morality; but this deſign was not diſcovered in the new poem, which had a form and a title with which its readers were unacquainted. Its reception was not uniform; ſome thought it a very imperfect piece, though not without good lines. While the author was unknown, ſome, as will always happen, favoured him as an adventurer, and ſome cenſured him as an intruder; but all thought him above neglect; the ſale increaſed, and editions were multiplied.

The

The ſubſequent editions of the firſt Epiſtle exhibited two memorable corrections. At firſt, the poet and his friend

Expatiate free o'er this ſcene of man,
A mighty maze *of walks without a plan.*

For which he wrote afterwards,

A mighty maze, *but not without a plan.*

For, if there were no plan, it was vain to deſcribe or to trace the maze.

The other alteration was of theſe lines;

And ſpite of pride, *and in thy reaſon's ſpite,*

One truth is clear, whatever is, is right: but having afterwards diſcovered, or been ſhewn, that the *truth* which ſubſiſted *in ſpite of reaſon* could not be very *clear*, he ſubſtituted

And ſpite of pride, *in erring reaſon's ſpite.*

To ſuch overſights will the moſt vigorous mind be liable, when it is employed at once upon argument and poetry.

The ſecond and third Epiſtles were publiſhed; and Pope was, I believe, more and more ſuſpected of writing them; at laſt, in 1734, he avowed the fourth, and claimed the honour of a moral poet.

In the concluſion it is ſufficiently acknowledged, that the doctrine of the *Eſſay on Man* was received from Bolingbroke, who is ſaid to have ridiculed Pope, among thoſe who enjoyed his confidence, as having adopted and advanced principles of which he did not perceive the conſequence, and as blindly

propagating opinions contrary to his own. That thoſe communications had been conſolidated into a ſcheme regularly drawn, and delivered to Pope, from whom it returned only transformed from proſe to verſe, is reported, but hardly can be true. The Eſſay plainly appears the fabrick of a poet: what Bolingbroke ſupplied could be only the firſt principles; the order, illuſtration, and embelliſhments muſt all be Pope's.

Theſe principles it is not my buſineſs to clear from obſcurity, dogmatiſm, or falſehood; but they were not immediately examined; philoſophy and poetry have not often the ſame readers; and the Eſſay abounded in ſplendid amplifications and ſparkling ſentences, which

And ſpite of pride, *in erring reaſon's ſpite.*

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In the concluſion [illegible] knowledged, that [illegible] *Eſſay on Man* was [illegible] broke, who is ſa[illegible] Pope, among tho[illegible] confidence, as havi[illegible] vanced principles [illegible] perceive the conſeq[illegible]

Propagating opinions contrary to his own. That those communications had been consolidated into a scheme regularly drawn, and delivered to Pope, from whom it returned only transformed from prose to verse, is reported, but hardly can be true. The Essay plainly appears the [illegible]rick of a poet: what Boling-[illegible]lied could be only the first [illegible] order, illustration, and [illegible]ust all be [illegible]pe's. [illegible] is [illegible] business [illegible]sm, or to [illegible]iate: falseh[illegible]y ly ex[illegible] have n[illegible] the Ess[illegible] fications

were read and admired, with no great attention to their ultimate purpoſe; its flowers caught the eye, which did not ſee what the gay foliage concealed, and for a time flouriſhed in the ſunſhine of univerſal approbation. So little was any evil tendency diſcovered, that, as innocence is unſuſpicious, many read it for a manual of piety.

Its reputation ſoon invited a tranſlator. It was firſt turned into French proſe, and afterwards by Reſnel into verſe. Both tranſlations fell into the hands of Crouſaz, who firſt, when he had the verſion in proſe, wrote a general cenſure, and afterwards reprinted Reſnel's verſion, with particular remarks upon every paragraph.

Crou-

Crouſaz was a profeſſor of Switzerland, eminent for his treatiſe of Logick, and his *Examen de Pyrrhoniſme*, and, however little known or regarded, was no mean antagoniſt. His mind was one of thoſe in which philoſophy and piety are happily united. He was accuſtomed to argument and diſquiſition, and perhaps was grown too deſirous of detecting faults; but his intentions were always right, his opinions were ſolid, and his religion pure.

His inceſſant vigilance for the promotion of piety diſpoſed him to look with diſtruſt upon all metaphyſical ſyſtems of Theology, and all ſchemes of virtue and happineſs purely rational, and therefore it was not long before he

was perſuaded that the poſitions of Pope, as they terminated for the moſt part in natural religion, were intended to draw mankind away from Revelation, and to repreſent the whole courſe of things as a neceſſary concatenation of indiſſoluble fatality; and it is undeniable, that in many paſſages a religious eye may eaſily diſcover expreſſions not very favourable to morals, or to liberty.

About this time Warburton began to make his appearance in the firſt ranks of learning. He was a man of vigorous faculties, a mind fervid and vehement, ſupplied by inceſſant and unlimited enquiry, with wonderful extent and variety of knowledge, which yet had

had not oppreſſed his imagination, nor clouded his perſpicacity. To every work he brought a memory full fraught with a fancy fertile of original combinations, and at once exerted the powers of the ſcholar, the reaſoner, and the wit. But his knowledge was too multifarious to be always exact, and his purſuits were too eager to be always cautious. His abilities gave him an haughty confidence, which he diſdained to conceal or mollify; and his impatience of oppoſition diſpoſed him to treat his adverſaries with ſuch contemptuous ſuperiority as made his readers commonly his enemies, and excited againſt him the wiſhes of ſome who favoured his cauſe. He ſeems to have adopted the

Roman Emperor's determination, *oderint dum metuant*; he uſed no allurements of gentle language, but wiſhed to compel rather than perſuade.

His ſtyle is copious without ſelection, and forcible without neatneſs; he took the words that preſented themſelves: his diction is coarſe and impure, and his ſentences are unmeaſured.

He had, in the early part of his life, pleaſed himſelf with the notice of inferior wits, and correſponded with the enemies of Pope. A Letter was produced, when he had perhaps himſelf forgotten it, in which he tells *Concanen, that* Milton *borrowed by affectation*, Dryden *by idleneſs, and* Pope *by neceſſity*. And when Theobald publiſhed *Shakeſpeare*,

ſpeare, in oppoſition to Pope, the beſt notes were ſupplied by Warburton.

But the time was now come when Warburton was to change his opinion, and Pope was to find a defender in him who had contributed ſo much to the exaltation of his rival.

The arrogance of Warburton excited againſt him every artifice of offence, and therefore it may be ſuppoſed that his union with Pope was cenſured as hypocritical inconſtancy; but ſurely to think differently, at different times, of poetical merit, may be eaſily allowed. Such opinions are often admitted, and diſmiſſed, without nice examination. Who is there that has not found reaſon

for changing his mind about queſtions of greater importance?

Warburton, whatever was his motive, undertook, without ſolicitation, to reſcue Pope from the talons of Crouſaz, by freeing him from the imputation of favouring fatality, or rejecting revelation; and from month to month continued a vindication of the *Eſſay on Man*, in the literary journal of that time called the *Republick of Letters*.

Pope, who probably began to doubt the tendency of his own work, was glad that the poſitions, of which he perceived himſelf not to know the full meaning, could by any mode of interpretation be made to mean well. How much he was pleaſed with his gratuitous defender,

fender, the following Letter evidently ſhews:

"SIR, March 24, 1743.

"I have juſt received from Mr. R. "two more of your Letters. It is in "the greateſt hurry imaginable that I "write this; but I cannot help thank- "ing you in particular for your third "Letter, which is ſo extremely clear, "ſhort, and full, that I think Mr. "Crouſaz ought never to have another "anſwer, and deſerved not ſo good an "one. I can only ſay, you do him too "much honour, and me too much right, "ſo odd as the expreſſion ſeems; for "you have made my ſyſtem as clear as "I ought to have done, and could not. "It is indeed the ſame ſyſtem as mine,

"but

" but illuſtrated with a ray of your own,
" as they ſay our natural body is the
" ſame ſtill when it is glorified. I am
" ſure I like it better than I did before,
" and ſo will every man elſe. I know
" I meant juſt what you explain; but I
" did not explain my own meaning ſo
" well as you. You underſtand me as
" well as I do myſelf; but you expreſs
" me better than I could expreſs my-
" ſelf. Pray, accept the ſincereſt ac-
" knowledgements. I cannot but wiſh
" theſe Letters were put together in
" one Book, and intend (with your
" leave) to procure a tranſlation of part,
" at leaſt, of all them into French; but
" I ſhall not proceed a ſtep without your
" conſent and opinion, &c."

By

By this fond and eager acceptance of an exculpatory comment, Pope teſtified that, whatever might be the ſeeming or real import of the principles which he had received from Bolingbroke, he had not intentionally attacked religion; and Bolingbroke, if he meant to make him without his own conſent an inſtrument of miſchief, found him now engaged with his eyes open on the ſide of truth.

It is known that Bolingbroke concealed from Pope his real opinions. He once diſcovered them to Mr. Hooke, who related them again to Pope, and was told by him that he muſt have miſtaken the meaning of what he heard; and Bolingbroke, when Pope's uneaſineſs incited him to deſire an explanation,

nation, declared that Hooke had miſunderſtood him.

Bolingbroke hated Warburton, who had drawn his pupil from him; and a little before Pope's death they had a diſpute, from which they parted with mutual averſion.

From this time Pope lived in the cloſeſt intimacy with his commentator, and amply rewarded his kindneſs and his zeal; for he introduced him to Mr. Murray, by whoſe intereſt he became preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and to Mr. Allen, who gave him his niece and his eſtate, and by conſequence a biſhoprick; when he died he left him the property of his works; a legacy which may be rea-

reaſonably eſtimated at four thouſand pounds.

Pope's fondneſs for the *Eſſay on Man* appeared by his deſire of its propagation. Dobſon, who had gained reputation by his verſion of Prior's *Solomon*, was employed by him to tranſlate it into Latin verſe, and was for that purpoſe ſome time at Twickenham; but he left his work, whatever was the reaſon, unfiniſhed; and, by Benſon's invitation, undertook the longer taſk of *Paradiſe Loſt*. Pope then deſired his friend to find a ſcholar who ſhould turn his Eſſay into Latin proſe; but no ſuch performance has ever appeared.

Pope lived at this time *among the great*, with that reception and reſpect

to which his works entitled him, and which he had not impaired by any private miſconduct or factious partiality. Though Bolingbroke was his friend, Walpole was not his enemy; but treated him with ſo much conſideration as, at his requeſt, to ſolicit and obtain from the French Miniſter an abby for Mr. Southcot, whom he conſidered himſelf as obliged to reward, by this exertion of his intereſt, for the benefit which he had received from his attendance in a long illneſs.

It was ſaid, that, when the Court was at Richmond, Queen Caroline had declared her intention to viſit him. This may have been only a careleſs effuſion, thought on no more: the report of ſuch

notice,

notice, however, was ſoon in many mouths; and, if I do not forget or miſapprehend Savage's account, Pope, pretending to decline what was not yet offered, left his houſe for a time, not, I ſuppoſe, for any other reaſon than leſt he ſhould be thought to ſtay at home in expectation of an honour which would not be conferred. He was therefore angry at Swift, who repreſents him as *refuſing the viſits of a Queen*, becauſe he knew that what had never been offered, had never been refuſed.

Beſide the general ſyſtem of morality ſuppoſed to be contained in the *Eſſay on Man*, it was his intention to write diſtinct poems upon the different duties or conditions of life; one of which is the

Epiſtle to Lord Bathurſt (1733) on the *Uſe of Riches*, a piece on which he declared great labour to have been beſtowed *.

Into this poem ſome incidents are hiſtorically thrown, and ſome known characters are introduced, with others of which it is difficult to ſay how far they are real or fictitious; but the praiſe of *Kyrl*, the *Man of Roſs*, deſerves particular examination, who, after a long and pompous enumeration of his publick works and private charities, is ſaid to have diffuſed all thoſe bleſſings from *five hundred a year*. Wonders are willingly told, and willingly heard. The truth is, that *Kyrl* was a man of known

* Spence.

inte-

integrity, and active benevolence, by whoſe ſolicitation the wealthy were perſuaded to pay contributions to his charitable ſchemes; this influence he obtained by an example of liberality exerted to the utmoſt extent of his power, and was thus enabled to give more than he had. This account Mr. *Victor* received from the miniſter of the place, and I have preſerved it, that the praiſe of a good man being made more credible, may be more ſolid. Narrations of romantick and impracticable virtue will be read with wonder, but that which is unattainable is recommended in vain; that good may be endeavoured, it muſt be ſhewn to be poſſible.

This is the only piece in which the author has given a hint of his religion, by ridiculing the ceremony of burning the pope, and by mentioning with ſome indignation the inſcription on the Monument.

When this poem was firſt publiſhed, the dialogue, having no letters of direction, was perplexed and obſcure. Pope ſeems to have written with no very diſtinct idea; for he calls that an *Epiſtle to Bathurſt*, in which Bathurſt is introduced as ſpeaking.

He afterwards (1734) inſcribed to Lord Cobham his *Characters of Men*, written with cloſe attention to the operations of the mind and modifications of life. In this poem he has endea-

voured to eſtabliſh and exemplify his favourite theory of the *Ruling Paſſion*, by which he means an original direction of deſire to ſome particular object, an innate affection which gives all action a determinate and invariable tendency, and operates upon the whole ſyſtem of life, either openly, or more ſecretly by the intervention of ſome accidental or ſubordinate propenſion.

Of any paſſion, thus innate and irreſiſtible, the exiſtence may reaſonably be doubted. Human characters are by no means conſtant; men change by change of place, of fortune, of acquaintance; he who is at one time a lover of pleaſure, is at another a lover of money. Thoſe indeed who attain any excel-

lence, commonly ſpend life in one purſuit; for excellence is not often gained upon eaſier terms. But to the particular ſpecies of excellence men are directed, not by an aſcendant planet or predominating humour, but by the firſt book which they read, ſome early converſation which they heard, or ſome accident which excited ardour and emulation.

It muſt be at leaſt allowed that this *ruling Paſſion*, antecedent to reaſon and obſervation, muſt have an object independent on human contrivance; for there can be no natural deſire of artificial good. No man therefore can be born, in the ſtrict acceptation, a lover of money; for he may be born where mo-

ney

ney does not exiſt; nor can he be born, in a moral ſenſe, a lover of his country; for ſociety, politically regulated, is a ſtate contradiſtinguiſhed from a ſtate of nature; and any attention to that coalition of intereſts which makes the happineſs of a country, is poſſible only to thoſe whom enquiry and reflection have enabled to comprehend it.

This doctrine is in itſelf pernicious as well as falſe: its tendency is to produce the belief of a kind of moral predeſtination, or over-ruling principle which cannot be reſiſted; he that admits it, is prepared to comply with every deſire that caprice or opportunity ſhall excite, and to flatter himſelf that he ſubmits only to the lawful dominion of Nature,

in obeying the reſiſtleſs authority of his *ruling Paſſion.*

Pope has formed his theory with ſo little ſkill, that, in the examples by which he illuſtrates and confirms it, he has confounded paſſions, appetites, and habits.

To the *Characters of Men* he added ſoon after, in an Epiſtle ſuppoſed to have been addreſſed to Martha Blount, but which the laſt edition has taken from her, the *Characters of Women.* This poem, which was laboured with great diligence, and in the author's opinion with great ſucceſs, was neglected at its firſt publication, as the commentator ſuppoſes, becauſe the publick was informed by an advertiſement, that it con-

contained *no Character drawn from the life*; an aſſertion which Pope probably did not expect or wiſh to have been believed, and which he ſoon gave his readers ſufficient reaſon to diſtruſt, by telling them in a note, that the work was imperfect, becauſe part of his ſubject was *Vice too high* to be yet expoſed.

The time however ſoon came, in which it was ſafe to diſplay the Dutcheſs of Marlborough under the name of *Atoſſa*; and her character was inſerted with no great honour to the writer's gratitude.

He publiſhed from time to time (between 1730 and 1740) Imitations of different poems of Horace, generally with his name, and once as was ſuſpected

without it. What he was upon moral principles aſhamed to own, he ought to have ſuppreſſed. Of theſe pieces it is uſeleſs to ſettle the dates, as they had ſeldom much relation to the times, and perhaps had been long in his hands.

This mode of imitation, in which the ancients are familiariſed, by adapting their ſentiments to modern topicks, by making Horace ſay of Shakſpeare what he originally ſaid of Ennius, and accommodating his ſatires on Pantolabus and Nomentanus to the flatterers and prodigals of our own time, was firſt practiſed in the reign of Charles the Second by Oldham and Rocheſter, at leaſt I remember no inſtances more ancient. It is a kind of middle compoſition between tranſla-

tranſlation and original deſign, which pleaſes when the thoughts are unexpectedly applicable, and the parallels lucky. It ſeems to have been Pope's favourite amuſement; for he has carried it further than any former poet.

He publiſhed likewiſe a revival, in ſmoother numbers, of Dr. Donne's Satires, which was recommended to him by the Duke of Shrewſbury and the Earl of Oxford. They made no great impreſſion on the publick. Pope ſeems to have known their imbecillity, and therefore ſuppreſſed them while he was yet contending to riſe in reputation, but ventured them when he thought their deficiencies more likely to be imputed to Donne than to himſelf.

The

The Epiſtle to Dr. Arbuthnot, which ſeems to be derived in its firſt deſign from Boileau's Addreſs *à ſon Eſprit*, was publiſhed in January 1735, about a month before the death of him to whom it is inſcribed. It is to be regretted that either honour or pleaſure ſhould have been miſſed by Arbuthnot; a man eſtimable for his learning, amiable for his life, and venerable for his piety.

Arbuthnot was a man of great comprehenſion, ſkilful in his profeſſion, verſed in the ſciences, acquainted with ancient literature, and able to animate his maſs of knowledge by a bright and active imagination; a ſcholar with great brilliancy of wit; a wit, who, in the crowd of

of life, retained and diſcovered a noble ardour of religious zeal.

In this poem Pope ſeems to reckon with the publick. He vindicates himſelf from cenſures; and with dignity, rather than arrogance, enforces his own claims to kindneſs and reſpect.

Into this poem are interwoven ſeveral paragraphs which had been before printed as a fragment, and among them the ſatirical lines upon Addiſon, of which the laſt couplet has been twice corrected. It was at firſt,

Who would not ſmile if ſuch a man there be?
Who would not laugh if Addiſon were he?

Then,

Then,

Who would not grieve if ſuch a man there be?
Who would not laugh if Addiſon were he?

At laſt it is,

Who but muſt laugh if ſuch a man there be?
Who would not weep if Atticus were he?

He was at this time at open war with Lord Hervey, who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf as a ſteady adherent to the Miniſtry, and, being offended with a contemptuous anſwer to one of his pamphlets, had ſummoned Pulteney to a duel. Whether he or Pope made the firſt

firſt attack, perhaps cannot now be eaſily known: he had written an invective againſt Pope, whom he calls, *Hard as thy heart and as thy birth obſcure*; and hints that his father was a *hatter*. To this Pope wrote a reply in verſe and proſe: the verſes are in this poem; and the proſe, though it was never ſent, is printed among his Letters, but to a cool reader of the preſent time exhibits nothing but tedious malignity.

His laſt Satires, of the general kind, were two dialogues, named from the year in which they were publiſhed *Seventeen hundred and Thirty-eight*. In theſe poems many are praiſed, and many are reproached. Pope was then entangled in the oppoſition; a follower of

the

the Prince of Wales, who dined at his houſe, and the friend of many who obſtructed and cenſured the conduct of the Miniſters. His political partiality was too plainly ſhewn; he forgot the prudence with which he paſſed, in his earlier years, uninjured and unoffending through much more violent conflicts of faction.

In the firſt dialogue, having an opportunity of praiſing Allen of Bath, he aſked his leave to mention him as a man not illuſtrious by any merit of his anceſtors, and called him in his verſes *low-born Allen*. Men are ſeldom ſatisfied with praiſe introduced or followed by any mention of defect. Allen ſeems not to have taken any pleaſure in his epithet,

epithet, which was afterwards ſoftened into *humble Allen*.

In the ſecond Dialogue he took ſome liberty with one of the *Foxes*, among others; which *Fox*, in a reply to Lyttelton, took an opportunity of repaying, by reproaching him with the friendſhip of a lampooner, who ſcattered his ink without fear or decency, and againſt whom he hoped the reſentment of the Legiſlature would quickly be diſcharged.

About this time Paul Whitehead, a ſmall poet, was ſummoned before the Lords for a poem called *Manners*, together with Dodſley his publiſher. Whitehead, who hung looſe upon ſociety, ſculked and eſcaped; but Dodſley's ſhop and family made his appearance neceſſary.

ſary. He was, however, ſoon diſmiſſed; and the whole proceſs was probably intended rather to intimidate Pope than to puniſh Whitehead.

Pope never afterwards attempted to join the patriot with the poet, nor drew his pen upon ſtateſmen. That he deſiſted from his attempts of reformation is imputed, by his commentator, to his deſpair of prevailing over the corruption of the time. He was not likely to have been ever of opinion that the dread of his ſatire would countervail the love of power or of money; he pleaſed himſelf with being important and formidable, and gratified ſometimes his pride, and ſometimes his reſentment; till at

laſt he began to think he ſhould be more ſafe, if he were leſs buſy.

The *Memoirs of Scriblerus*, publiſhed about this time, extend only to the firſt book of a work, projected in concert by Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, who uſed to meet in the time of Queen Anne, and denominated themſelves the *Scribblerus Club*. Their purpoſe was to cenſure the abuſes of learning by a fictitious Life of an infatuated Scholar. They were diſperſed; the deſign was never completed; and Warburton laments its miſcarriage, as an event very diſaſtrous to polite letters.

If the whole may be eſtimated by this ſpecimen, which ſeems to be the production of Arbuthnot, with a few

touches perhaps by Pope, the want of more will not be much lamented; for the follies which the writer ridicules are ſo little practiſed, that they are not known; nor can the ſatire be underſtood but by the learned: he raiſes phantoms of abſurdity, and then drives them away. He cures diſeaſes that were never felt.

For this reaſon the joint production of three great writers has never obtained any notice from mankind; it has been little read, or when read has been forgotten, as no man could be wiſer, better, or merrier, by remembering it.

The deſign cannot boaſt of much originality; for, beſides its general reſemblance to *Don Quixote*, there will be found

found in it particular imitations of the Hiſtory of Mr. *Ouffle*.

Swift carried ſo much of it into Ireland as ſupplied him with hints for his *Travels*; and with thoſe the world might have been contented, though the reſt had been ſuppreſſed.

Pope had ſought for images and ſentiments in a region not known to have been explored by many other of the Engliſh writers; he had conſulted the modern writers of Latin poetry, a claſs of authors whom Boileau endeavoured to bring into contempt, and who are too generally neglected. Pope, however, was not aſhamed of their acquaintance, nor ungrateful for the advantages which he might have derived from it. A ſmall

ſelection from the Italians who wrote in Latin had been publiſhed at London, about the latter end of the laſt century, by a man who concealed his name, but whom his Preface ſhews to have been well qualified for his undertaking. This collection Pope amplified by more than half, and (1740) publiſhed it in two volumes, but injuriouſly omitted his predeceſſor's preface. To theſe books, which had nothing but the mere text, no regard was paid, the authors were ſtill neglected, and the editor was neither praiſed nor cenſured.

He did not ſink into idleneſs; he had planned a work, which he conſidered as ſubſequent to his *Eſſay on Man*, of which he has given this account to Dr. Swift.

"March

" March 25, 1736.

" If ever I write any more Epiſtles " in verſe, one of them ſhall be ad- " dreſſed to you. I have long con- " certed it, and begun it; but I would " make what bears your name as finiſhed " as my laſt work ought to be, that is to " ſay, more finiſhed than any of the reſt. " The ſubject is large, and will divide " into four Epiſtles, which naturally " follow the *Eſſay on Man*, viz. 1. Of " the Extent and Limits of Human Rea- " ſon and Science. 2. A View of the " uſeful and therefore attainable, and " of the unuſeful and therefore unat- " tainable Acts. 3. Of the Nature, " Ends, Application, and Uſe of dif- " ferent Capacities. 4. Of the Uſe of

" *Learning*, of the *Science*, of the *World*, " and of *Wit*. It will conclude with a " ſatire againſt the Miſapplication of all " theſe, exemplified by Pictures, Cha- " racters, and Examples."

This work in its full extent, being now afflicted with an aſthma, and finding the powers of life gradually declining, he had no longer courage to undertake; but, from the materials which he had provided, he added, at Warburton's requeſt, another book to the *Dunciad*, of which the deſign is to ridicule ſuch ſtudies as are either hopeleſs or uſeleſs, as either purſue what is unattainable, or what, if it be attained, is of no uſe.

When

When this book was printed (1742) the laurel had been for ſome time upon the head of Cibber; a man whom it cannot be ſuppoſed that Pope could regard with much kindneſs or eſteem, though in one of the Imitations of *Horace* he has liberally enough praiſed the *Careleſs Husband.* In the *Dunciad*, among other worthleſs ſcribblers, he had mentioned Cibber; who, in his *Apology*, complains of the great poet's unkindneſs as more injurious, *becauſe*, ſays he, *I never have offended him.*

It might have been expected that Pope ſhould have been, in ſome degree, mollified by this ſubmiſſive gentleneſs; but no ſuch conſequence appeared. Though he condeſcended to commend

Cibber once, he mentioned him afterwards contemptuouſly in one of his Satires, and again in his Epiſtle to Arbuthnot; and in the fourth book of the *Dunciad* attacked him with acrimony, to which the provocation is not eaſily diſcoverable. Perhaps he imagined that in ridiculing the Laureat, he ſatiriſed thoſe by whom the laurel had been given, and gratified that ambitious petulance with which he affected to inſult the great.

The ſeverity of this ſatire left Cibber no longer any patience. He had confidence enough in his own powers to believe that he could diſturb the quiet of his adverſary, and doubtleſs did not want inſtigators, who, without any care about the

the victory, deſired to amuſe themſelves by looking on the conteſt. He therefore gave the town a pamphlet, in which he declares his reſolution from that time never to bear another blow without returning it, and to tire out his adverſary by perſeverance, if he cannot conquer him by ſtrength.

The inceſſant and unappeaſable malignity of Pope he imputes to a very diſtant cauſe. After the *Three Hours after Marriage* had been driven off the ſtage, by the offence which the mummy and crocodile gave the audience, while the exploded ſcene was yet freſh in memory, it happened that Cibber played *Bays* in the *Rehearſal*; and, as it had been uſual to enliven the part by the

men-

mention of any recent theatrical tranſactions, he ſaid, that he once thought to have introduced his lovers diſguiſed in a Mummy and a Crocodile. "This," ſays he, "was received with loud "claps, which indicated contempt of the "play." Pope, who was behind the ſcenes, meeting him as he left the ſtage, attacked him, as he ſays, with all the virulence of a *Wit out of his ſenſes*; to which he replied, "that he would take "no other notice of what was ſaid by "ſo particular a man than to declare, "that, as often as he played that part, "he would repeat the ſame provoca-"tion."

He ſhews his opinion to be, that Pope was one of the authors of the play which he

he ſo zealouſly defended; and adds an idle ſtory of Pope's behaviour at a tavern.

The pamphlet was written with little power of thought or language, and, if ſuffered to remain without notice, would have been very ſoon forgotten. Pope had now been enough acquainted with human life to know, if his paſſion had not been too powerful for his underſtanding, that, from a contention like his with Cibber, the world ſeeks nothing but diverſion, which is given at the expence of the higher character. When Cibber lampooned Pope, curioſity was excited; what Pope would ſay of Cibber nobody enquired, but in hope that Pope's aſpe-

aſperity might betray his pain and leſſen his dignity.

He ſhould therefore have ſuffered the pamphlet to flutter and die, without confeſſing that it ſtung him. The diſhonour of being ſhewn as Cibber's antagoniſt could never be compenſated by the victory. Cibber had nothing to loſe; when Pope had exhauſted all his malignity upon him, he would riſe in the eſteem both of his friends and his enemies. Silence only could have made him deſpicable; the blow which did not appear to be felt, would have been ſtruck in vain.

But Pope's irraſcibility prevailed, and he reſolved to tell the whole Engliſh world that he was at war with Cibber;

and

and to ſhew that he thought him no common adverſary, he prepared no common vengeance; he publiſhed a new edition of the *Dunciad*, in which he degraded *Theobald* from his painful preeminence, and enthroned *Cibber* in his ſtead. Unhappily the two heroes were of oppoſite characters, and Pope was unwilling to loſe what he had already written; he has therefore depraved his poem by giving to Cibber the old books, the cold pedantry and ſluggiſh pertinacity of Theobald.

Pope was ignorant enough of his own intereſt to make another change, and introduced Oſborne contending for the prize among the bookſellers. Oſborne was a man intirely deſtitute of ſhame, without

without ſenſe of any diſgrace but that of poverty. He told me, when he was doing that which raiſed Pope's reſentment, that he ſhould be put into the *Dunciad*; but he had the fate of *Caſſandra*; I gave no credit to his prediction, till in time I ſaw it accompliſhed. The ſhafts of ſatire were directed equally in vain againſt Cibber and Oſborne; being repelled by the impenetrable impudence of one, and deadened by the impaſſive dulneſs of the other. Pope confeſſed his own pain by his anger; but he gave no pain to thoſe who had provoked him. He was able to hurt none but himſelf; by transferring the ſame ridicule from one to another, he deſtroyed its efficacy; for by ſhewing that what he had

had ſaid of one he was ready to ſay of another, he reduced himſelf to the inſignificance of his own magpye, who from his cage calls cuckold at a venture.

Cibber, according to his engagement, repaid the *Dunciad* with another pamphlet, which, Pope ſaid, *would be as good as a doſe of hartſhorn to him*; but his tongue and his heart were at variance. I have heard Mr. Richardſon relate, that he attended his father on a viſit, when one of Cibber's pamphlets came into the hands of Pope, who ſaid, *Theſe things are my diverſion.* They ſat by him while he peruſed it, and ſaw his features writhen with anguiſh; and young Richardſon ſaid to his father, when they returned, that he hoped to be preſerved from

from ſuch diverſion as had been that day the lot of Pope.

From this time, finding his diſeaſes more oppreſſive, and his vital powers gradually declining, he no longer ſtrained his faculties with any original compoſition, nor propoſed any other employment for his remaining life than the reviſal and correction of his former works; in which he received advice and aſſiſtance from Warburton, whom he appears to have truſted and honoured in the higheſt degree.

He laid aſide his Epick Poem, perhaps without much loſs to mankind; for his hero was *Brutus* the Trojan, who, according to a ridiculous fiction, eſtabliſhed a colony in Britain. The ſubject

therefore was of the fabulous age; the actors were a race upon whom imagination has been exhauſted, and attention wearied, and to whom the mind will not eaſily be recalled, when it is invited in blank verſe, which Pope had adopted with great imprudence, and, I think, without due conſideration of the nature of our language. The ſketch is, at leaſt in part, preſerved by Ruffhead; by which it appears, that Pope was thoughtleſs enough to model the names of his heroes with diſcordant terminations not known in the ſame age.

He lingered through the next year; but perceived himſelf, as he expreſſes it, *going down the hill.* He had for at leaſt five years been afflicted with an aſthma,

and other diſorders, which his phyſicians were unable to relieve. Towards the end of his life he conſulted Dr. Thomſon, a man who had, by large promiſes, and free cenſures of the common practice of phyſick, forced himſelf up into ſudden reputation. Thomſon declared his diſtemper to be a dropſy, and evacuated part of the water by tincture of jalap; but confeſſed that his belly did not ſubſide. Thomſon had many enemies, and Pope was perſuaded to diſmiſs him.

While he was yet capable of amuſement and converſation, as he was one day ſitting in the air with Lord Bolingbroke and Lord Marchmont, he ſaw his favourite Martha Blount at the bottom of

of the terrace, and aſked Lord Bolingbroke to go and hand her up. Bolingbroke, not liking his errand, croſſed his legs, and ſat ſtill; but Lord Marchmont, who was younger and leſs captious, waited on the Lady; who, when he came to her, aſked, *What, is he not dead yet?* She is ſaid to have neglected him, with ſhameful unkindneſs, in the latter time of his decay; yet, of the little which he had to leave, ſhe had a very great part. Their acquaintance begun early; the life of each was pictured on the other's mind; their converſation therefore was endearing, for when they met, there was an immediate coalition of congenial notions. Perhaps he conſidered her unwillingneſs to approach

the chamber of ſickneſs as female weakneſs, or human frailty; perhaps he was conſcious to himſelf of peeviſhneſs and impatience, or, though he was offended by her inattention, might yet conſider her merit as overbalancing her fault; and, if he had ſuffered his heart to be alienated from her, he could have found nothing that might fill her place; he could have only ſhrunk within himſelf; it was too late to transfer his confidence or fondneſs.

In May 1744, his death was approaching*; on the ſixth, he was all day delirious, which he mentioned four days afterwards as a ſufficient humiliation of the vanity of man; he afterwards

* Spence.

com-

complained of ſeeing things as through a curtain, and in falſe colours; and one day, in the preſence of Dodſley, aſked what arm it was that came out from the wall. He ſaid, that his greateſt inconvenience was inability to think.

Bolingbroke ſometimes wept over him in this ſtate of helpleſs decay; and being told by Spence, that Pope, at the intermiſſion of his deliriouſneſs, was always ſaying ſomething kind either of his preſent or abſent friends, and that his humanity ſeemed to have ſurvived his underſtanding, anſwered, *It has ſo.* And added, *I never in my life knew a man that had ſo tender a heart for his particular friends, or more general friendſhip for mankind.* At another time he ſaid,

yet inſpected; and, whatever was the reaſon, the world has been diſappointed of what was *reſerved for the next age.*

He loſt, indeed, the favour of Bolingbroke by a kind of poſthumous offence. The political pamphlet called the *Patriot King* had been put into his hands, that he might procure the impreſſion of a very few copies, to be diſtributed according to the author's direction among his friends, and Pope aſſured him that no more had been printed than were allowed; but, ſoon after his death, the printer brought and reſigned a complete edition of fifteen hundred copies, which Pope had ordered him to print, and to retain in ſecret. He kept, as was obſerved, his engagement to Pope better than

than Pope had kept it to his friend; and nothing was known of the tranſaction, till, upon the death of his employer, he thought himſelf obliged to deliver the books to the right owner, who, with great indignation, made a fire in his yard, and delivered the whole impreſſion to the flames.

Hitherto nothing had been done which was not naturally dictated by reſentment of violated faith; reſentment more acrimonious, as the violator had been more loved or more truſted. But here the anger might have ſtopped; the injury was private, and there was little danger from the example.

Bolingbroke, however, was not yet ſatisfied; his thirſt of vengeance incited him

him to blaſt the memory of the man over whom he had wept in his laſt ſtruggles; and he employed Mallet, another friend of Pope, to tell the tale to the publick, with all its aggravations. Warburton, whoſe heart was warm with his legacy, and tender by the recent ſeparation, thought it proper for him to interpoſe; and undertook, not indeed to vindicate the action, for breach of truſt has always ſomething criminal, but to extenuate it by an apology. Having advanced, what cannot be denied, that moral obliquity is made more or leſs excuſable by the motives that produce it, he enquires what evil purpoſe could have induced Pope to break his promiſe. He could not delight his vanity

vanity by uſurping the work, which, though not ſold in ſhops, had been ſhewn to a number more than ſufficient to preſerve the author's claim: he could not gratify his avarice; for he could not ſell his plunder till Bolingbroke was dead; and even then, if the copy was left to another, his fraud would be defeated, and if left to himſelf, would be uſeleſs.

Warburton therefore ſuppoſes, with great appearance of reaſon, that the irregularity of his conduct proceeded wholly from his zeal for Bolingbroke, who might perhaps have deſtroyed the pamphlet, which Pope thought it his duty to preſerve, even without its author's approbation.

He

He brought ſome reproach upon his own memory by the petulant and contemptuous mention made in his will of Mr. Allen, and an affected repayment of his benefactions. Mrs. Blount, as the known friend and favourite of Pope, had been invited to the houſe of Allen, where ſhe comported herſelf with ſuch indecent arrogance, that ſhe parted from Mrs. Allen in a ſtate of irreconcileable diſlike, and the door was for ever barred againſt her. This excluſion ſhe reſented with ſo much bitterneſs as to refuſe any legacy from Pope, unleſs he left the world with a diſavowal of obligation to Allen. Having been long under her dominion, now tottering in the decline of life, and unable to reſiſt the violence

of

of her temper, or, perhaps with the prejudice of a lover, perſuaded that ſhe had ſuffered improper treatment, he complied with her demand, and polluted his will with female reſentment. Allen accepted the legacy, which he gave to the Hoſpital at Bath; obſerving that Pope was always a bad accomptant, and that if to 150 *l.* he had put a cypher more, he had come nearer to the truth.

THE

THE perſon of Pope is well known not to have been formed by the niceſt model. He has, in his account of the *Little Club*, compared himſelf to a ſpider, and is deſcribed as protuberant behind and before. He is ſaid to have been beautiful in his infancy; but he was of a conſtitution originally feeble and weak; and as bodies of a tender frame are eaſily diſtorted, his deformity was probably in part the effect of his application. His ſtature was ſo low, that, to bring him to a level with common tables, it was neceſſary to raiſe his

ſeat. But his face was not diſpleaſing, and his eyes were animated and vivid.

By natural deformity, or accidental diſtortion, his vital functions were ſo much diſordered, that his life was a *long diſeaſe*. His moſt frequent aſſailant was the headach, which he uſed to relieve by inhaling the ſteam of coffee, which he very frequently required.

Moſt of what can be told concerning his petty peculiarities was communicated by a female domeſtick of the Earl of Oxford, who knew him perhaps after the middle of life. He was then ſo weak as to ſtand in perpetual need of female attendance; extremely ſenſible of cold, ſo that he wore a kind of fur doublet, under a ſhirt of very coarſe warm

warm linen with fine ſleeves. When he roſe, he was inveſted in boddice made of ſtiff canvaſs, being ſcarce able to hold himſelf erect till they were laced, and he then put on a flannel waiſtcoat. One ſide was contracted. His legs were ſo ſlender, that he enlarged their bulk with three pair of ſtockings, which were drawn on and off by the maid; for he was not able to dreſs or undreſs himſelf, and neither went to bed nor roſe without help. His weakneſs made it very difficult for him to be clean.

His hair had fallen almoſt all away; and he uſed to dine ſometimes with Lord Oxford, privately, in a velvet cap. His dreſs of ceremony was black, with a tye-wig, and a little ſword.

The indulgence and accommodation which his ſickneſs required, had taught him all the unpleaſing and unſocial qualities of a valetudinary man. He expected that every thing ſhould give way to his eaſe or humour, as a child, whoſe parents will not hear her cry, has an unreſiſted dominion in the nurſery.

C'eſt que l'enfant toûjours eſt homme,
C'eſt que l'homme eſt toûjours enfant.

When he wanted to ſleep, he *nodded in company*; and once ſlumbered at his own table, while the Prince of Wales was talking of poetry.

The reputation which his friendſhip gave, procured him many invitations; but he was a very troubleſome inmate. He brought no ſervant, and had ſo many

wants, that a numerous attendance was ſcarcely able to ſupply them. Whereever he was, he left no room for another, becauſe he exacted the attention and employed the activity of the whole family. His errands were ſo frequent and frivolous, that the footmen in time avoided and neglected him; and the Earl of Oxford diſcharged ſome of the ſervants for their reſolute refuſal of his meſſages. The maids, when they had neglected their buſineſs, alleged that they had been employed by Mr. Pope. One of his conſtant demands was of coffee in the night, and to the woman that waited on him in his chamber he was very burthenſome; but he was careful to recompenſe her want of ſleep; and

and Lord Oxford's ſervant declared, that in a houſe where her buſineſs was to anſwer his call, ſhe would not aſk for wages.

He had another fault, eaſily incident to thoſe who, ſuffering much pain, think themſelves entitled to whatever pleaſures they can ſnatch. He was too indulgent to his appetite; he loved meat highly ſeaſoned and of ſtrong taſte; and, at the intervals of the table, amuſed himſelf with biſcuits and dry conſerves. If he ſat down to a variety of diſhes, he would oppreſs his ſtomach with repletion, and though he ſeemed angry when a dram was offered him, did not forbear to drink it. His friends, who knew the avenues to his heart, pampered him with

King, as it can be imputed to no particular motive, muſt have proceeded from his general habit of ſecrecy and cunning; he caught an opportunity of a ſly trick, and pleaſed himſelf with the thought of outwitting Bolingbroke.

In familiar or convivial converſation, it does not appear that he excelled. He may be ſaid to have reſembled Dryden, as being not one that was diſtinguiſhed by vivacity in company. It is remarkable, that, ſo near his time, ſo much ſhould be known of what he has written, and ſo little of what he has ſaid: traditional memory retains no ſallies of raillery, nor ſentences of obſervation; nothing either pointed or ſolid, either wiſe or merry. One apophthegm only

only ſtands upon record. When an objection raiſed againſt his inſcription for Shakſpeare was defended by the authority of *Patrick*, he replied—*horreſco referens*—that *he would allow the publiſher of a Dictionary to know the meaning of a ſingle word, but not of two words put together.*

He was fretful, and eaſily diſpleaſed, and allowed himſelf to be capriciouſly reſentful. He would ſometimes leave Lord Oxford ſilently, no one could tell why, and was to be courted back by more letters and meſſages than the footmen were willing to carry. The table was indeed infeſted by Lady Mary Wortley, who was the friend of Lady Oxford, and who, knowing his peeviſhneſs,

could by no intreaties be reſtrained from contradicting him, till their diſputes were ſharpened to ſuch aſperity, that one or the other quitted the houſe.

He ſometimes condeſcended to be jocular with ſervants or inferiors; but by no merriment, either of others or his own, was he ever ſeen excited to laughter.

Of his domeſtick character, frugality was a part eminently remarkable. Having determined not to be dependent, he determined not to be in want, and therefore wiſely and magnanimouſly rejected all temptations to expence unſuitable to his fortune. This general care muſt be univerſally approved; but it ſometimes appeared in petty artifices of parſimony, ſuch as the practice of

writing his compoſitions on the back of letters, as may be ſeen in the remaining copy of the *Iliad*, by which perhaps in five years five ſhillings were ſaved; or in a niggardly reception of his friends, and ſcantineſs of entertainment, as, when he had two gueſts in his houſe, he would ſet at ſupper a ſingle pint upon the table; and having himſelf taken two ſmall glaſſes would retire, and ſay, *Gentlemen, I leave you to your wine.* Yet he tells his friends, that *he has a heart for all, a houſe for all, and, whatever they may think, a fortune for all.*

He ſometimes, however, made a ſplendid dinner, and is ſaid to have wanted no part of the ſkill or elegance which ſuch performances require. That this

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magnificence ſhould be often diſplayed, that obſtinate prudence with which he conducted his affairs would not permit; for his revenue, certain and caſual, amounted only to about eight hundred pounds a year, of which however he declares himſelf able to aſſign one hundred to charity.

Of this fortune, which as it aroſe from publick approbation was very honourably obtained, his imagination ſeems to have been too full: it would be hard to find a man, ſo well entitled to notice by his wit, that ever delighted ſo much in talking of his money. In his Letters, and in his Poems, his garden and his grotto, his quincunx and his vines, or ſome hints of his opulence, are al-

ways to be found. The great topick of his ridicule is poverty; the crimes with which he reproaches his antagoniſts are their debts, their habitation in the Mint, and their want of a dinner. He ſeems to be of an opinion not very uncommon in the world, that to want money is to want every thing.

Next to the pleaſure of contemplating his poſſeſſions, ſeems to be that of enumerating the men of high rank with whom he was acquainted, and whoſe notice he loudly proclaims not to have been obtained by any practices of meanneſs or ſervility; a boaſt which was never denied to be true, and to which very few poets have ever aſpired. Pope never ſet his genius to ſale; he never flat-

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tered thoſe whom he did not love, or praiſed thoſe whom he did not eſteem. Savage however remarked, that he began a little to relax his dignity when he wrote a diſtich for *his Highneſs's dog*.

His admiration of the Great ſeems to have increaſed in the advance of life. He paſſed over peers and ſtateſmen to inſcribe his *Iliad* to Congreve, with a magnanimity of which the praiſe had been compleat, had his friend's virtue been equal to his wit. Why he was choſen for ſo great an honour, it is not now poſſible to know; there is no trace in literary hiſtory of any particular intimacy between them; nor does the name of Congreve appear in the Letters. To his latter works, however, he took care

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to annex names dignified with titles, but was not very happy in his choice; for, except Lord Bathurſt, none of his noble friends were ſuch as that a good man would wiſh to have his intimacy with them known to poſterity: he can derive little honour from the notice of Cobham, Burlington, or Bolingbroke.

Of his ſocial qualities, if an eſtimate be made from his Letters, an opinion too favourable cannot eaſily be formed; they exhibit a perpetual and unclouded effulgence of general benevolence, and particular fondneſs. There is nothing but liberality, gratitude, conſtancy, and tenderneſs. It has been ſo long ſaid as to be commonly believed, that the true characters of men may be found in their

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Letters, and that he who writes to his friend lays his heart open before him. But the truth is, that ſuch were ſimple friendſhips of the *Golden Age*, and are now the friendſhips only of children. Very few can boaſt of hearts which they dare lay open to themſelves, and of which, by whatever accident expoſed, they do not ſhun a diſtinct and continued view; and, certainly, what we hide from ourſelves we do not ſhew to our friends. There is, indeed, no tranſaction which offers ſtronger temptations to fallacy and ſophiſtication than epiſtolary intercourſe. In the eagerneſs of converſation the firſt emotions of the mind often burſt out, before they are conſidered; in the tumult of buſineſs, intereſt and paſſion have

have their genuine effect; but a friendly Letter is a calm and deliberate performance, in the cool of leiſure, in the ſtillneſs of ſolitude, and ſurely no man ſits down to depreciate by deſign his own character.

Friendſhip has no tendency to ſecure veracity; for by whom can a man ſo much wiſh to be thought better than he is, as by him whoſe kindneſs he deſires to gain or keep? Even in writing to the world there is leſs conſtraint; the author is not confronted with his reader, and takes his chance of approbation among the different diſpoſitions of mankind; but a Letter is addreſſed to a ſingle mind, of which the prejudices and partialities are known; and muſt

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therefore pleaſe, if not by favouring them, by forbearing to oppoſe them.

To charge thoſe favourable repreſentations, which every man gives of himſelf, with the guilt of hypocritical falſhood, would ſhew more ſeverity than knowledge. The writer commonly believes himſelf. Almoſt every man's thoughts, while they are general, are right; and moſt hearts are pure, while temptation is away. It is eaſy to awaken generous ſentiments in privacy; to deſpiſe death when there is no danger; to glow with benevolence when there is nothing to be given. While ſuch ideas are formed they are felt, and ſelf-love does not ſuſpect the gleam of virtue to be the meteor of fancy.

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If the Letters of Pope are conſidered merely as compoſitions, they ſeem to be premeditated and artificial. It is one thing to write becauſe there is ſomething which the mind wiſhes to diſcharge, and another, to ſolicit the imagination becauſe ceremony or vanity requires ſomething to be written. Pope confeſſes his early Letters to be vitiated with *affectation and ambition:* to know whether he diſentangled himſelf from theſe perverters of epiſtolary integrity, his book and his life muſt be ſet in compariſon.

One of his favourite topicks is contempt of his own poetry. For this, if it had been real, he would deſerve no commendation, and in this he was

certainly not ſincere; for his high value of himſelf was ſufficiently obſerved, and of what could he be proud but of his poetry? He writes, he ſays, when *he has juſt nothing elſe to do*; yet Swift complains that he was never at leiſure for converſation, becauſe he *had always ſome poetical ſcheme in his head.* It was punctually required that his writing-box ſhould be ſet upon his bed before he roſe; and Lord Oxford's domeſtick related, that, in the dreadful winter of Forty, ſhe was called from her bed by him four times in one night, to ſupply him with paper, leſt he ſhould loſe a thought.

He pretends inſenſibility to cenſure and criticiſm, though it was obſerved by

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all who knew him that every pamphlet disturbed his quiet, and that his extreme irritability laid him open to perpetual vexation; but he wished to despise his criticks, and therefore hoped that he did despise them.

As he happened to live in two reigns when the Court paid little attention to poetry, he nursed in his mind a foolish disesteem of Kings, and proclaims that *he never sees Courts.* Yet a little regard shewn him by the Prince of Wales melted his obduracy; and he had not much to say when he was asked by his Royal Highness, *how he could love a Prince while he disliked Kings?*

He very frequently professes contempt of the world, and represents himself

as looking on mankind, ſometimes with gay indifference, as on emmets of a hillock, below his ſerious attention; and ſometimes with gloomy indignation, as on monſters more worthy of hatred than of pity. Theſe were diſpoſitions apparently counterfeited. How could he deſpiſe thoſe whom he lived by pleaſing, and on whoſe approbation his eſteem of himſelf was ſuperſtructed? Why ſhould he hate thoſe to whoſe favour he owed his honour and his eaſe? Of things that terminate in human life, the world is the proper judge; to deſpiſe its ſentence, if it were poſſible, is not juſt; and if it were juſt, is not poſſible. Pope was far enough from this unreaſonable temper; he was ſufficiently *a fool to Fame*,

Fame, and his fault was that he pretended to neglect it. His levity and his ſullenneſs were only in his Letters; he paſſed through common life, ſometimes vexed, and ſometimes pleaſed, with the natural emotions of common men.

His ſcorn of the Great is repeated too often to be real; no man thinks much of that which he deſpiſes; and as falſehood is always in danger of inconſiſtency, he makes it his boaſt at another time that he lives among them.

It is evident that his own importance ſwells often in his mind. He is afraid of writing, leſt the clerks of the Poſt-office ſhould know his ſecrets; he has many enemies; he conſiders himſelf as ſurrounded by univerſal jealouſy; *after*

many deaths, and many diſperſions, two or three of us, ſays he, *may ſtill be brought together, not to plot, but to divert ourſelves, and the world too, if it pleaſes*; and they can live together, and *ſhew what friends wits may be, in ſpite of all the fools in the world.* All this while it was likely that the clerks did not know his hand; he certainly had no more enemies than a publick character like his inevitably excites, and with what degree of friendſhip the wits might live very few were ſo much fools as ever to enquire.

Some part of this pretended diſcontent he learned from Swift, and expreſſes it, I think, moſt frequently in his correſpondence with him. Swift's reſentment

ment was unreaſonable, but it was ſincere; Pope's was the mere mimickry of his friend, a fictitious part which he began to play before it became him. When he was only twenty-five years old, he related that *a glut of ſtudy and retirement had thrown him on the world*, and that there was danger leſt *a glut of the world ſhould throw him back upon ſtudy and retirement*. To this Swift anſwered with great propriety, that Pope had not yet either acted or ſuffered enough in the world to have become weary of it. And, indeed, it muſt be ſome very powerful reaſon that can drive back to ſolitude him who has once enjoyed the pleaſures of ſociety.

In the Letters both of Swift and Pope there appears ſuch narrowneſs of mind, as makes them inſenſible of any excellence that has not ſome affinity with their own, and confines their eſteem and approbation to ſo ſmall a number, that whoever ſhould form his opinion of the age from their repreſentation, would ſuppoſe them to have lived amidſt ignorance and barbarity, unable to find among their contemporaries either virtue or intelligence, and perſecuted by thoſe that could not underſtand them.

When Pope murmurs at the world, when he profeſſes contempt of fame, when he ſpeaks of riches and poverty, of ſucceſs and diſappointment, with negligent indifference, he certainly does not

not expreſs his habitual and ſettled ſentiments, but either wilfully diſguiſes his own character, or, what is more likely, inveſts himſelf with temporary qualities, and ſallies out in the colours of the preſent moment. His hopes and fears, his joys and ſorrows, acted ſtrongly upon his mind; and if he differed from others, it was not by careleſſneſs; he was irritable and reſentful; his malignity to Philips, whom he had firſt made ridiculous, and then hated for being angry, continued too long. Of his vain deſire to make Bentley contemptible, I never heard any adequate reaſon. He was ſometimes wanton in his attacks; and, before Chandos, Lady Wort-

Wortley, and Hill, was mean in his retreat.

The virtues which ſeem to have had moſt of his affection were liberality and fidelity of friendſhip, in which it does not appear that he was other than he deſcribes himſelf. His fortune did not ſuffer his charity to be ſplendid and conſpicuous; but he aſſiſted Dodſley with a hundred pounds, that he might open a ſhop; and of the ſubſcription of forty pounds a year that he raiſed for Savage, twenty were paid by himſelf. He was accuſed of loving money, but his love was eagerneſs to gain, not ſolicitude to keep it.

In the duties of friendſhip he was zealous and conſtant: his early matu-

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rity of mind commonly united him with men older than himſelf, and therefore, without attaining any conſiderable length of life, he ſaw many companions of his youth ſink into the grave; but it does not appear that he loſt a ſingle friend by coldneſs or by injury; thoſe who loved him once, continued their kindneſs. His ungrateful mention of Allen in his will, was the effect of his adherence to one whom he had known much longer, and whom he naturally loved with greater fondneſs. His violation of the truſt repoſed in him by Bolingbroke could have no motive inconſiſtent with the warmeſt affection; he either thought the action ſo near to indifferent that he forgot

forgot it, or ſo laudable that he expected his friend to approve it.

It was reported, with ſuch confidence as almoſt to enforce belief, that in the papers intruſted to his executors was found a defamatory Life of Swift, which he had prepared as an inſtrument of vengeance to be uſed, if any provocation ſhould be ever given. About this I enquired of the Earl of Marchmont, who aſſured me that no ſuch piece was among his remains.

The religion in which he lived and died was that of the Church of Rome, to which in his correſpondence with Racine he profeſſes himſelf a ſincere adherent. That he was not ſcrupulouſly pious in ſome part of his life, is known by

by many idle and indecent applications of ſentences taken from the Scriptures; a mode of merriment which a good man dreads for its profaneneſs, and a witty man diſdains for its eaſineſs and vulgarity. But to whatever levities he has been betrayed, it does not appear that his principles were ever corrupted, or that he ever loſt his belief of Revelation. The poſitions which he tranſmitted from Bolingbroke he ſeems not to have underſtood, and was pleaſed with an interpretation that made them orthodox.

A man of ſuch exalted ſuperiority, and ſo little moderation, would naturally have all his delinquences obſerved and aggravated: thoſe who could not

deny that he was excellent, would rejoice to find that he was not perfect.

Perhaps it may be imputed to the unwillingneſs with which the ſame man is allowed to poſſeſs many advantages, that his learning has been depreciated. He certainly was in his early life a man of great literary curioſity; and when he wrote his *Eſſay on Criticiſm* had, for his age, a very wide acquaintance with books. When he entered into the living world, it ſeems to have happened to him as to many others, that he was leſs attentive to dead maſters; he ſtudied in the academy of Paracelſus, and made the univerſe his favourite volume. He gathered his notions freſh from reality, not from the copies of authors, but the

the originals of Nature. Yet there is no reaſon to believe that literature ever loſt his eſteem; he always profeſſed to love reading; and Dobſon, who ſpent ſome time at his houſe tranſlating his *Eſſay on Man*, when I aſked him what learning he found him to poſſeſs, anſwered, *More than I expected.* His frequent references to hiſtory, his alluſions to various kinds of knowledge, and his images ſelected from art and nature, with his obſervations on the operations of the mind and the modes of life, ſhew an intelligence perpetually on the wing, excurſive, vigorous, and diligent, eager to purſue knowledge, and attentive to retain it.

From

From this curiosity arose the desire of travelling, to which he alludes in his verses to Jervas, and which, though he never found an opportunity to gratify it, did not leave him till his life declined.

Of his intellectual character, the constituent and fundamental principle was Good Sense, a prompt and intuitive perception of consonance and propriety. He saw immediately, of his own conceptions, what was to be chosen, and what to be rejected; and, in the works of others, what was to be shunned, and what was to be copied.

But good sense alone is a sedate and quiescent quality, which manages its possessions well, but does not increase them;

them; it collects few materials for its own operations, and preſerves ſafety, but never gains ſupremacy. Pope had likewiſe genius; a mind active, ambitious, and adventurous, always inveſtigating, always aſpiring; in its wideſt ſearches ſtill longing to go forward, in its higheſt flights ſtill wiſhing to be higher; always imagining ſomething greater than it knows, always endeavouring more than it can do.

To aſſiſt theſe powers, he is ſaid to have had great ſtrength and exactneſs of memory. That which he had heard or read was not eaſily loſt; and he had before him not only what his own meditation ſuggeſted, but what he had found in

other writers that might be accommodated to his preſent purpoſe.

Theſe benefits of nature he improved by inceſſant and unwearied diligence; he had recourſe to every ſource of intelligence, and loſt no opportunity of information; he conſulted the living as well as the dead; he read his compoſitions to his friends, and was never content with mediocrity when excellence could be attained. He conſidered poetry as the buſineſs of his life, and however he might ſeem to lament his occupation, he followed it with conſtancy; to make verſes was his firſt labour, and to mend them was his laſt.

From his attention to poetry he was never diverted. If converſation offered any

any thing that could be improved, he committed it to paper; if a thought, or perhaps an expreſſion more happy than was common, roſe to his mind, he was careful to write it; an independent diſtich was preſerved for an opportunity of inſertion, and ſome little fragments have been found containing lines, or parts of lines, to be wrought upon at ſome other time.

He was one of thoſe few whoſe labour is their pleaſure: he was never elevated to negligence, nor wearied to impatience; he never paſſed a fault unamended by indifference, nor quitted it by deſpair. He laboured his works firſt to gain reputation, and afterwards to keep it.

Of compoſition there are different methods. Some employ at once memory and invention, and, with little intermediate uſe of the pen, form and poliſh large maſſes by continued meditation, and write their productions only when, in their own opinion, they have completed them. It is related of Virgil, that his cuſtom was to pour out a great number of verſes in the morning, and paſs the day in retrenching exuberances and correcting inaccuracies. The method of Pope, as may be collected from his tranſlation, was to write his firſt thoughts in his firſt words, and gradually to amplify, decorate, rectify, and refine them.

With

With ſuch faculties, and ſuch diſpoſitions, he excelled every other writer in *poetical prudence*; he wrote in ſuch a manner as might expoſe him to few hazards. He uſed almoſt always the ſame fabrick of verſe; and, indeed, by thoſe few eſſays which he made of any other, he did not enlarge his reputation. Of this uniformity the certain conſequence was readineſs and dexterity. By perpetual practice, language had in his mind a ſyſtematical arrangement; having always the ſame uſe for words, he had words ſo ſelected and combined as to be ready at his call. This increaſe of facility he confeſſed himſelf to have perceived in the progreſs of his tranſlation.

But what was yet of more importance, his effuſions were always voluntary, and his ſubjects choſen by himſelf. His independence ſecured him from drudging at a taſk, and labouring upon a barren topick: he never exchanged praiſe for money, nor opened a ſhop of condolence or congratulation. His poems, therefore, were ſcarce ever temporary. He ſuffered coronations and royal marriages to paſs without a ſong, and derived no opportunities from recent events, or popularity from the accidental diſpoſition of his readers. He was never reduced to the neceſſity of ſoliciting the ſun to ſhine upon a birth-day, of calling the Graces and Virtues to a wedding, or of ſaying what multitudes have

have ſaid before him. When he could produce nothing new, he was at liberty to be ſilent.

His publications were for the ſame reaſon never haſty. He is ſaid to have ſent nothing to the preſs till it had lain two years under his inſpection: it is at leaſt certain, that he ventured nothing without nice examination. He ſuffered the tumult of imagination to ſubſide, and the novelties of invention to grow familiar. He knew that the mind is always enamoured of its own productions, and did not truſt his firſt fondneſs. He conſulted his friends, and liſtened with great willingneſs to criticiſm; and, what was of more importance, he con-

ſulted himſelf, and let nothing paſs againſt his own judgement.

He profeſſed to have learned his poetry from Dryden, whom, whenever an opportunity was preſented, he praiſed through his whole life with unvaried liberality; and perhaps his character may receive ſome illuſtration, if he be compared with his maſter.

Integrity of underſtanding and nicety of diſcernment were not allotted in a leſs proportion to Dryden than to Pope. The rectitude of Dryden's mind was ſufficiently ſhewn by the diſmiſſion of his poetical prejudices, and the rejection of unnatural thoughts and rugged numbers. But Dryden never deſired to apply all the judgement that he had. He wrote,

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and profeſſed to write, merely for the people; and when he pleaſed others, he contented himſelf. He ſpent no time in ſtruggles to rouſe latent powers; he never attempted to make that better which was already good, nor often to mend what he muſt have known to be faulty. He wrote, as he tells us, with very little conſideration; when occaſion or neceſſity called upon him, he poured out what the preſent moment happened to ſupply, and, when once it had paſſed the preſs, ejected it from his mind; for when he had no pecuniary intereſt, he had no further ſolicitude.

Pope was not content to ſatisfy; he deſired to excel, and therefore always endeavoured to do his beſt: he did not

court

court the candour, but dared the judgement of his reader, and expecting no indulgence from others, he ſhewed none to himſelf. He examined lines and words with minute and punctilious obſervation, and retouched every part with indefatigable diligence, till he had left nothing to be forgiven.

For this reaſon he kept his pieces very long in his hands, while he conſidered and reconſidered them. The only poems which can be ſuppoſed to have been written with ſuch regard to the times as might haſten their publication, were the two ſatires of *Thirty-eight*; of which Dodſley told me, that they were brought to him by the author, that they might be fairly copied. "Every

"line,"

"line," ſaid he, "was then written "twice over; I gave him a clean tran- "ſcript, which he ſent ſome time af- "terwards to me for the preſs, with "every line written twice over a ſecond "time."

His declaration, that his care for his works ceaſed at their publication, was not ſtrictly true. His parental attention never abandoned them; what he found amiſs in the firſt edition, he ſilently corrected in thoſe that followed. He appears to have reviſed the *Iliad*, and freed it from ſome of its imperfections; and the *Eſſay on Criticiſm* received many improvements after its firſt appearance. It will ſeldom be found that he altered without adding clearneſs, elegance, or vigour.

vigour. Pope had perhaps the judgement of Dryden; but Dryden certainly wanted the diligence of Pope.

In acquired knowledge, the ſuperiority muſt be allowed to Dryden, whoſe education was more ſcholaſtick, and who before he became an author had been allowed more time for ſtudy, with better means of information. His mind has a larger range, and he collects his images and illuſtrations from a more extenſive circumference of ſcience. Dryden knew more of man in his general nature, and Pope in his local manners. The notions of Dryden were formed by comprehenſive ſpeculation, and thoſe of Pope by minute attention. There is more dignity in the knowledge

of Dryden, and more certainty in that of Pope.

Poetry was not the ſole praiſe of either; for both excelled likewiſe in proſe; but Pope did not borrow his proſe from his predeceſſor. The ſtyle of Dryden is capricious and varied, that of Pope is cautious and uniform; Dryden obeys the motions of his own mind, Pope conſtrains his mind to his own rules of compoſition. Dryden is ſometimes vehement and rapid; Pope is always ſmooth, uniform, and gentle. Dryden's page is a natural field, riſing into inequalities, and diverſified by the varied exuberance of abundant vegetation; Pope's is a velvet lawn, ſhaven

by

by the ſcythe, and levelled by the roller.

Of genius, that power which conſtitutes a poet; that quality without which judgement is cold and knowledge is inert; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates; the ſuperiority muſt, with ſome heſitation, be allowed to Dryden. It is not to be inferred that of this poetical vigour Pope had only a little, becauſe Dryden had more; for every other writer ſince Milton muſt give place to Pope; and even of Dryden it muſt be ſaid, that if he has brighter paragraphs, he has not better poems. Dryden's performances were always haſty, either excited by ſome external

ternal occaſion, or extorted by domeſtick neceſſity; he compoſed without conſideration, and publiſhed without correction. What his mind could ſupply at call, or gather in one excurſion, was all that he ſought, and all that he gave. The dilatory caution of Pope enabled him to condenſe his ſentiments, to multiply his images, and to accumulate all that ſtudy might produce, or chance might ſupply. If the flights of Dryden therefore are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and conſtant. Dryden often ſurpaſſes expectation, and Pope never falls below it.

it. Dryden is read with frequent aſtoniſhment, and Pope with perpetual delight.

This parallel will, I hope, when it is well conſidered, be found juſt; and if the reader ſhould ſuſpect me, as I ſuſpect myſelf, of ſome partial fondneſs for the memory of Dryden, let him not too haſtily condemn me; for meditation and enquiry may, perhaps, ſhew him the reaſonableneſs of my determination.

THE

THE Works of Pope are now to be diſtinctly examined, not ſo much with attention to ſlight faults or petty beauties, as to the general character and effect of each performance.

It ſeems natural for a young poet to initiate himſelf by Paſtorals, which, not profeſſing to imitate real life, require no experience, and, exhibiting only the ſimple operation of unmingled paſſions, admit no ſubtle reaſoning or deep enquiry. Pope's Paſtorals are not however compoſed but with cloſe thought;

they have reference to the times of the day, the ſeaſons of the year, and the periods of human life. The laſt, that which turns the attention upon age and death, was the author's favourite. To tell of diſappointment and miſery, to thicken the darkneſs of futurity, and perplex the labyrinth of uncertainty, has been always a delicious employment of the poets. His preference was probably juſt. I wiſh, however, that his fondneſs had not overlooked a line in which the *Zephyrs* are made *to lament in ſilence.*

To charge theſe Paſtorals with want of invention, is to require what never was intended. The imitations are ſo ambitiouſly frequent, that the writer evidently

dently means rather to ſhew his literature than his wit. It is ſurely ſufficient for an author of ſixteen not only to be able to copy the poems of antiquity with judicious ſelection, but to have obtained ſufficient power of language, and ſkill in metre, to exhibit a ſeries of verſification, which had in Engliſh poetry no precedent, nor has ſince had an imitation.

The deſign of *Windſor Foreſt* is evidently derived from *Cooper's Hill*, with ſome attention to Waller's poem on *The Park*; but Pope cannot be denied to excel his maſters in variety and elegance, and the art of interchanging deſcription, narrative, and morality. The objection made by Dennis is the want of

plan, of a regular ſubordination of parts terminating in the principal and original deſign. There is this want in moſt deſcriptive poems, becauſe the ſcenes, which they muſt exhibit ſucceſſively, are all ſubſiſting at the ſame time, and therefore the order in which they are ſhewn muſt by neceſſity be arbitrary, and more is not to be expected from the laſt part than from the firſt. The attention, therefore, which cannot be detained by ſuſpenſe, muſt be excited by diverſity, ſuch as this poem offers to its reader.

But the deſire of diverſity may be too much indulged; the parts of *Windſor Foreſt* which deſerve leaſt praiſe, are thoſe which were added to enliven the ſtillneſs of the ſcene, the appearance of Father

Father Thames, and the transformation of *Lodona*. Addiſon had in his *Campaign* derided the *Rivers* that *riſe from their oozy beds* to tell ſtories of heroes, and it is therefore ſtrange that Pope ſhould adopt a fiction not only unnatural but lately cenſured. The ſtory of *Lodona* is told with great ſweetneſs; but a new metamorphoſis is a ready and puerile expedient; nothing is eaſier than to tell how a flower was once a blooming virgin, or a rock an obdurate tyrant.

The *Temple of Fame* has, as Steele warmly declared, *a thouſand beauties*. Every part is ſplendid; there is great luxuriance of ornaments; the original viſion of Chaucer was never denied to be much improved; the allegory is

very ſkilfully continued, the imagery is properly ſelected, and learnedly diſplayed: yet, with all this comprehenſion of excellence, as its ſcene is laid in remote ages, and its ſentiments, if the concluding paragraph be excepted, have little relation to general manners or common life, it ſeems never to have obtained much notice, but is turned ſilently over, and ſeldom quoted or mentioned with either praiſe or blame.

That the *Meſſiah* excels the *Pollio* is no great praiſe, if it be conſidered from what original the improvements are derived.

The *Verſes on the unfortunate Lady* have drawn much attention by the illaudable ſingularity of treating ſuicide with

with reſpect; and they muſt be allowed to be written in ſome parts with vigorous animation, and in others with gentle tenderneſs; nor has Pope produced any poem in which the ſenſe predominates more over the diction. But the tale is not ſkilfully told; it is not eaſy to diſcover the character of either the Lady or her Guardian. Hiſtory relates that ſhe was about to diſparage herſelf by a marriage with an inferior; Pope praiſes her for the dignity of ambition, and yet condemns the unkle to deteſtation for his pride; though the ambitious love of a niece may be oppoſed by the intereſt, malice, or envy of an unkle, but never by his pride. On ſuch an occaſion a poet may be

allowed to be obſcure, but inconſiſtency never can be right.

The *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* was undertaken at the deſire of Steele: in this the author is generally confeſſed to have miſcarried, yet he has miſcarried only as compared with Dryden; for he has far outgone other competitors. Dryden's plan is better choſen; hiſtory will always take ſtronger hold of the attention than fable: the paſſions excited by Dryden are the pleaſures and pains of real life, the ſcene of Pope is laid in imaginary exiſtence; Pope is read with calm acquieſcence, Dryden with turbulent delight; Pope hangs upon the ear, and Dryden finds the paſſes of the mind.

Both

Both the odes want the eſſential conſtituent of metrical compoſitions, the ſtated recurrence of ſettled numbers. It may be alleged, that Pindar is ſaid by Horace to have written *numeris lege ſolutis*; but as no ſuch lax performances have been tranſmitted to us, the meaning of that expreſſion cannot be fixed; and perhaps the like return might properly be made to a modern Pindariſt, as Mr. Cobb received from Bentley, who, when he found his criticiſms upon a Greek Exerciſe, which Cobb had preſented, refuted one after another by Pindar's authority, cried out at laſt, *Pindar was a bold fellow, but thou art an impudent one.*

If

If Pope's ode be particularly inſpected, it will be found that the firſt ſtanza conſiſts of ſounds well choſen indeed, but only ſounds.

The ſecond conſiſts of hyperbolical common-places, eaſily to be found, and perhaps without much difficulty to be as well expreſſed.

In the third, however, there are numbers, images, harmony, and vigour, not unworthy the antagoniſt of Dryden. Had all been like this—but every part cannot be the beſt.

The next ſtanzas place and detain us in the dark and diſmal regions of mythology, where neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor ſorrow, can be found: the poet however faithfully attends us; we have

have all that can be performed by elegance of diction, or ſweetneſs of verſification; but what can form avail without better matter?

The laſt ſtanza recurs again to common places. The concluſion is too evidently modelled by that of Dryden; and it may be remarked that both end with the ſame fault, the compariſon of each is literal on one ſide, and metaphorical on the other.

Poets do not always expreſs their own thoughts; Pope, with all this labour in the praiſe of Muſick, was ignorant of its principles, and inſenſible of its effects.

One of his greateſt though of his earlieſt works is the *Eſſay on Criticiſm*, which,

which, if he had written nothing elſe, would have placed him among the firſt criticks and the firſt poets, as it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embelliſh or dignify didactick compoſition, ſelection of matter, novelty of arrangement, juſtneſs of precept, ſplendour of illuſtration, and propriety of digreſſion. I know not whether it be pleaſing to conſider that he produced this piece at twenty, and never afterwards excelled it: he that delights himſelf with obſerving that ſuch powers may be ſo ſoon attained, cannot but grieve to think that life was ever after at a ſtand.

To mention the particular beauties of the Eſſay would be unprofitably tedious; but I cannot forbear to obſerve, that

that the compariſon of a ſtudent's progreſs in the ſciences with the journey of a traveller in the Alps, is perhaps the beſt that Engliſh poetry can ſhew. A ſimile, to be perfect, muſt both illuſtrate and ennoble the ſubject; muſt ſhew it to the underſtanding in a clearer view, and diſplay it to the fancy with greater dignity; but either of theſe qualities may be ſufficient to recommend it. In didactick poetry, of which the great purpoſe is inſtruction, a ſimile may be praiſed which illuſtrates, though it does not ennoble; in heroicks, that may be admitted which ennobles, though it does not illuſtrate. That it may be complete, it is required to exhibit, independently of its reference, a pleaſing image;

image; for a ſimile is ſaid to be a ſhort epiſode. To this antiquity was ſo attentive, that circumſtances were ſometimes added, which, having no parallels, ſerved only to fill the imagination, and produced what Perrault ludicrouſly called *compariſons with a long tail.* In their ſimilies the greateſt writers have ſometimes failed; the ſhip-race, compared with the chariot-race, is neither illuſtrated nor aggrandiſed; land and water make all the difference: when Apollo, running after Daphne, is likened to a greyhound chaſing a hare, there is nothing gained; the ideas of purſuit and flight are too plain to be made plainer, and a god and the daughter of a god are not repreſented much to their advan-

advantage by a hare and dog. The ſimile of the Alps has no uſeleſs parts, yet affords a ſtriking picture by itſelf; it makes the foregoing poſition better underſtood, and enables it to take faſter hold on the attention; it aſſiſts the apprehenſion, and elevates the fancy.

Let me likewiſe dwell a little on the celebrated paragraph, in which it is directed that *the ſound ſhould ſeem an echo to the ſenſe*; a precept which Pope is allowed to have obſerved beyond any other Engliſh poet.

This notion of repreſentative metre, and the deſire of diſcovering frequent adaptations of the ſound to the ſenſe, have produced, in my opinion, many wild conceits and imaginary beauties.

All

All that can furniſh this repreſentation are the ſounds of the words conſidered ſingly, and the time in which they are pronounced. Every language has ſome words framed to exhibit the noiſes which they expreſs, as *thump*, *rattle*, *growl*, *hiſs*. Theſe however are but few, and the poet cannot make them more, nor can they be of any uſe but when ſound is to be mentioned. The time of pronunciation was in the dactylick meaſures of the learned languages capable of conſiderable variety; but that variety could be accommodated only to motion or duration, and different degrees of motion were perhaps expreſſed by verſes rapid or ſlow, with very little attention of the writer, when the image had full poſſeſ-

ſion

ſion of his fancy; but our language having little flexibility, our verſes can differ very little in their cadence. The fancied reſemblances, I fear, ariſe ſometimes merely from the ambiguity of words; there is ſuppoſed to be ſome relation between a *ſoft* line and a *ſoft* couch, or between *hard* ſyllables and *hard* fortune.

Motion, however, may be in ſome ſort exemplified; and yet it may be ſuſpected that even in ſuch reſemblances the mind often governs the ear, and the ſounds are eſtimated by their meaning. One of the moſt ſucceſsful attempts has been to deſcribe the labour of Siſyphus:

With many a weary ſtep, and many a groan,
Up a high hill he heaves a huge round ſtone;
The huge round ſtone, reſulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and ſmoaks along the ground.
Who does not perceive the ſtone to move ſlowly upward, and roll violently back?
But ſet the ſame numbers to another ſenſe;

While many a merry tale, and many a ſong,
Chear'd the rough road, we wiſh'd the rough road long,
The rough road then, returning in a round,
Mock'd our impatient ſteps, for all was fairy ground.

We

We have now ſurely loſt much of the delay, and much of the rapidity.

But to ſhew how little the greateſt maſter of numbers can fix the principles of repreſentative harmony, it will be ſufficient to remark that the poet, who tells us, that

When Ajax ſtrives—the words move ſlow.
Not ſo when ſwift Camilla ſcours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and ſkims along the main;

when he had enjoyed for about thirty years the praiſe of Camilla's lightneſs of foot, tried another experiment upon *ſound* and *time*, and produced this memorable triplet;

Waller was ſmooth; but Dryden taught to join
The varying verſe, the full reſounding line,
The long majeſtick march, and energy divine.

Here are the ſwiftneſs of the rapid race, and the march of ſlow-paced majeſty, exhibited by the ſame poet in the ſame ſequence of ſyllables, except that the exact proſodiſt will find the line of *ſwiftneſs* by one time longer than that of *tardineſs*.

Beauties of this kind are commonly fancied; and when real, are technical and nugatory, not to be rejected, and not to be ſolicited.

To

To the praiſes which have been accumulated on *The Rape of the Lock* by readers of every claſs, from the critick to the waiting-maid, it is difficult to make any addition. Of that which is univerſally allowed to be the moſt attractive of all ludicrous compoſitions, let it rather be now enquired from what ſources the power of pleaſing is derived.

Dr. Warburton, who excelled in critical perſpicacity, has remarked that the preternatural agents are very happily adapted to the purpoſes of the poem. The heathen deities can no longer gain attention: we ſhould have turned away from a conteſt between Venus and Diana; the employment of allegorical perſons always excites conviction of its own abſurdity;

ſurdity; they may produce effects, but cannot conduct actions; when the phantom is put in motion it diſſolves; thus *Diſcord* may raiſe a mutiny, but *Diſcord* cannot conduct a march, nor beſiege a town. Pope brought into view a new race of Beings, with powers and paſſions proportionate to their operation. The ſylphs and gnomes act at the toilet and the tea-table; what more terrifick and more powerful phantoms perform on the ſtormy ocean, or the field of battle, they give their proper help, and do their proper miſchief.

Pope is ſaid, by an objector, not to have been the inventer of this petty nation; a charge which might with more juſtice have been brought againſt the author

author of the *Iliad*, who doubtleſs adopted the religious ſyſtem of his country; for what is there but the names of his agents which Pope has not invented? Has he not aſſigned them characters and operations never heard of before? Has he not, at leaſt, given them their firſt poetical exiſtence? If this is not ſufficient to denominate his work original, nothing original ever can be written.

In this work are exhibited, in a very high degree, the two moſt engaging powers of an author. New things are made familiar, and familiar things are made new. A race of aerial people, never heard of before, is preſented to us in a manner ſo clear and eaſy, that the

reader ſeeks for no further information, but immediately mingles with his new acquaintance, adopts their intereſts, and attends their purſuits, loves a ſylph, and deteſts a gnome.

That familiar things are made new, every paragraph will prove. The ſubject of the poem is an event below the common incidents of common life; nothing real is introduced that is not ſeen ſo often as to be no longer regarded, yet the whole detail of a female-day is here brought before us inveſted with ſo much art of decoration, that, though nothing is diſguiſed, every thing is ſtriking, and we feel all the appetite of curioſity for that from which we have a thouſand times turned faſtidiouſly away.

The

The purpoſe of the Poet is, as he tells us, to laugh at *the little unguarded follies of the female ſex.* It is therefore without juſtice that Dennis charges the *Rape of the Lock* with the want of a moral; and for that reaſon ſets it below the *Lutrin*, which expoſes the pride and diſcord of the clergy. Perhaps neither Pope nor Boileau has made the world much better than he found it; but if they had both ſucceeded, it were eaſy to tell who would have deſerved moſt from publick gratitude. The freaks, and humours, and ſpleen, and vanity of women, as they embroil families in diſcord, and fill houſes with diſquiet, do more to obſtruct the happineſs of life in a year than the ambition of the clergy in many

many centuries. It has been well obſerved, that the miſery of man proceeds not from any ſingle cruſh of overwhelming evil, but from ſmall vexations continually repeated.

It is remarked by Dennis likewiſe, that the machinery is ſuperfluous; that, by all the buſtle of preternatural operation, the main event is neither haſtened nor retarded. To this charge an efficacious anſwer is not eaſily made. The ſylphs cannot be ſaid to help or to oppoſe, and it muſt be allowed to imply ſome want of art, that their power has not been ſufficiently intermingled with the action. Other parts may likewiſe be charged with want of connection; the game at *ombre* might be ſpared, but if the

the Lady had loſt her hair while ſhe was intent upon her cards, it might have been inferred that thoſe who are too fond of play will be in danger of neglecting more important intereſts. Thoſe perhaps are faults; but what are ſuch faults to ſo much excellence!

The Epiſtle of *Eloiſe to Abelard* is one of the moſt happy productions of human wit: the ſubject is ſo judiciouſly choſen, that it would be difficult, in turning over the annals of the world, to find another which ſo many circumſtances concur to recommend. We regularly intereſt ourſelves moſt in the fortune of thoſe who moſt deſerve our notice. Abelard and Eloiſe were conſpicuous in their days for eminence of me-

rit. The heart naturally loves truth. The adventures and misfortunes of this illuſtrious pair are known from undiſputed hiſtory. Their fate does not leave the mind in hopeleſs dejection; for they both found quiet and conſolation in retirement and piety. So new and ſo affecting is their ſtory, that it ſuperſedes invention, and imagination ranges at full liberty without ſtraggling into ſcenes of fable.

The ſtory, thus ſkilfully adopted, has been diligently improved. Pope has left nothing behind him, which ſeems more the effect of ſtudious perſeverance and laborious reviſal. Here is particularly obſervable the *curioſa felicitas*, a fruitful ſoil, and careful cultivation.

Here

Here is no crudeneſs of ſenſe, nor aſperity of language.

The ſources from which ſentiments, which have ſo much vigour and efficacy, have been drawn, are ſhewn to be the myſtick writers by the learned author of the *Eſſay on the Life and Writings of Pope*; a book which teaches how the brow of Criticiſm may be ſmoothed, and how ſhe may be enabled, with all her ſeverity, to attract and to delight.

The train of my diſquiſition has now conducted me to that poetical wonder, the tranſlation of the *Iliad*; a performance which no age or nation can pretend to equal. To the Greeks tranſlation was almoſt unknown; it was totally unknown

unknown to the inhabitants of Greece. They had no recourſe to the Barbarians for poetical beauties, but ſought for every thing in Homer, where, indeed, there is but little which they might not find.

The Italians have been very diligent tranſlators; but I can hear of no verſion, unleſs perhaps Anguillara's Ovid may be excepted, which is read with eagerneſs. The *Iliad* of Salvini every reader may diſcover to be punctiliouſly exact; but it ſeems to be the work of a linguiſt ſkilfully pedantick, and his countrymen, the proper judges of its power to pleaſe, reject it with diſguſt.

Their predeceſſors the Romans have left ſome ſpecimens of tranſlation behind them,

them, and that employment muſt have had ſome credit in which Tully and Germanicus engaged; but unleſs we ſuppoſe, what is perhaps true, that the plays of Terence were verſions of Menander, nothing tranſlated ſeems ever to have riſen to high reputation. The French, in the meridian hour of their learning, were very laudably induſtrious to enrich their own language with the learning of the ancients; but found themſelves reduced, by whatever neceſſity, to turn the Greek and Roman poetry into proſe. Whoever could read an author, could tranſlate him. From ſuch rivals little can be feared.

The chief help of Pope in this arduous undertaking was drawn from the verſions

verſions of Dryden. Virgil had borrowed much of his imagery from Homer, and part of the debt was now paid by his tranſlator. Pope ſearched the pages of Dryden for happy combinations of heroic diction; but it will not be denied that he added much to what he found. He cultivated our language with ſo much diligence and art, that he has left in his *Homer* a treaſure of poetical elegancies to poſterity. His verſion may be ſaid to have tuned the Engliſh tongue; for ſince its appearance no writer, however deficient in other powers, has wanted melody. Such a ſeries of lines ſo elaborately corrected, and ſo ſweetly modulated, took poſſeſſion of the publick ear, the vulgar was enamoured

moured of the poem, and the learned wondered at the tranſlation.

But in the moſt general applauſe diſcordant voices will always be heard. It has been objected by ſome, who wiſh to be numbered among the ſons of learning, that Pope's verſion of Homer is not Homerical; that it exhibits no reſemblance of the original and characteriſtick manner of the Father of Poetry, as it wants his awful ſimplicity, his artleſs grandeur, his unaffected majeſty. This cannot be totally denied; but it muſt be remembered that *neceſſitas quod cogit defendit*; that may be lawfully done which cannot be forborn. Time and place will always enforce regard. In eſtimating this tranſlation, conſideration

muſt be had of the nature of our language, the form of our metre, and, above all, of the change which two thouſand years have made in the modes of life and the habits of thought. Virgil wrote in a language of the ſame general fabrick with that of Homer, in verſes of the ſame meaſure, and in an age nearer to Homer's time by eighteen hundred years; yet he found, even then, the ſtate of the world ſo much altered, and the demand for elegance ſo much increaſed, that mere nature would be endured no longer; and perhaps, in the multitude of borrowed paſſages, very few can be ſhewn which he has not embelliſhed.

There

There is a time when nations emerging from barbarity, and falling into regular ſubordination, gain leiſure to grow wiſe, and feel the ſhame of ignorance and the craving pain of unſatisfied curioſity. To this hunger of the mind plain ſenſe is grateful; that which fills the void removes uneaſineſs, and to be free from pain for a while is pleaſure; but repletion generates faſtidiouſneſs; a ſaturated intellect ſoon becomes luxurious, and knowledge finds no willing reception till it is recommended by artificial diction. Thus it will be found, as learning advances, that in all nations the firſt writers are ſimple, and that every age improves in elegance. One refinement always makes way for another,

ther, and what was expedient to Virgil was neceſſary to Pope.

I ſuppoſe many readers of the Engliſh *Iliad*, when they have been touched with ſome unexpected beauty of the lighter kind, have tried to enjoy it in the original, where, alas! it was not to be found. Homer doubtleſs owes to his tranſlator many *Ovidian* graces not exactly ſuitable to his character; but to have added can be no great crime, if nothing be taken away. Elegance is ſurely to be deſired, if it be not gained at the expence of dignity. A hero would wiſh to be loved, as well as to be reverenced.

To a thouſand cavils one anſwer is ſufficient; the purpoſe of a writer is to be

be read, and the criticiſm which would deſtroy the power of pleaſing muſt be blown aſide. Pope wrote for his own age and his own nation: he knew that it was neceſſary to colour the images and point the ſentiments of his author; he therefore made him graceful, but loſt him ſome of his ſublimity.

The copious notes with which the verſion is accompanied, and by which it is recommended to many readers, though they were undoubtedly written to ſwell the volumes, ought not to paſs without praiſe: commentaries which attract the reader by the pleaſure of peruſal have not often appeared; the notes of others are read to clear difficul-

therefore it was neceſſary to find other enemies with other names, at whoſe expence he might divert the publick.

In this deſign there was petulance and malignity enough; but I cannot think it very criminal. An author places himſelf uncalled before the tribunal of Criticiſm, and ſolicits fame at the hazard of diſgrace. Dulneſs or deformity are not culpable in themſelves, but may be very juſtly reproached when they pretend to the honour of wit or the influence of beauty. If bad writers were to paſs without reprehenſion, what ſhould reſtrain them? *impune diem conſumpſerit ingens Telephus*; and upon bad writers only will cenſure have much effect. The ſatire which brought Theobald and

Moore

Moore into contempt, dropped impotent from Bentley, like the javelin of Priam thrown at Neoptolemus.

All truth is valuable, and ſatirical criticiſm may be conſidered as uſeful when it rectifies error and improves judgement; he that refines the publick taſte is a publick benefactor.

The beauties of this poem are well known; its chief fault is the groſſneſs of its images. Pope and Swift had an unnatural delight in ideas phyſically impure, ſuch as every other tongue utters with unwillingneſs, and of which every ear ſhrinks from the mention.

But even this fault, offenſive as it is, may be forgiven for the excellence of other paſſages; ſuch as the formation and diſſolu-

diſſolution of Moore, the account of the Traveller, the misfortune of the Floriſt, and the crouded thoughts and ſtately numbers which dignify the concluding paragraph.

The alterations which have been made in the *Dunciad*, not always for the better, require that it ſhould be publiſhed, as in this edition, with all its variations.

The *Eſſay on Man* was a work of great labour and long conſideration, but certainly not the happieſt of Pope's performances. The ſubject is perhaps not very proper for poetry, and the poet was not ſufficiently maſter of his ſubject; metaphyſical morality was a new ſtudy, he was proud of his acquiſitions, and,

ſuppoſing himſelf maſter of great ſecrets, was in haſte to teach what he had not learned. Thus he tells us, in the firſt Epiſtle, that from the nature of the Supreme Being may be deduced an order of beings ſuch as mankind, becauſe Infinite Excellence can do only what is beſt. He finds out that *all the queſtion is whether man be in a wrong place.* Surely if, according to the poet's Leibnitian reaſoning, we may infer that man ought to be, only becauſe he is, we may allow that his place is the right place, becauſe he has it. Supreme Wiſdom is not leſs infallible in diſpoſing than in creating. But what is meant by *ſomewhere* and *place*, and *wrong place*, it had been

been vain to aſk Pope, who probably had never aſked himſelf.

Having exalted himſelf into the chair of wiſdom, he tells us much that every man knows, and much that he does not know himſelf; that we ſee but little, and that the order of the univerſe is beyond our comprehenſion; an opinion not very uncommon; and that there is a chain of ſubordinate beings *from infinite to nothing*, of which himſelf and his readers are equally ignorant. But he gives us one comfort, which, without his help, he ſuppoſes unattainable, the poſition *that though we are fools, yet God is wiſe.*

This Eſſay affords an egregious inſtance of the predominance of genius, the

the dazzling ſplendour of imagery, and the ſeductive powers of eloquence. Never were penury of knowledge and vulgarity of ſentiment ſo happily diſguiſed. The reader feels his mind full, though he learns nothing; and when he meets it in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurſe. When theſe wonder-working ſounds ſink into ſenſe, and the doctrine of the Eſſay diſrobed of its ornaments, is left to the powers of its naked excellence, what ſhall we diſcover? That we are, in compariſon with our Creator, very weak and ignorant; that we do not uphold the chain of exiſtence, and that we could not make one another with more ſkill than we are made. We may learn

learn yet more; that the arts of human life were copied from the inſtinctive operations of other animals; that if the world be made for man, it may be ſaid that man was made for geeſe. To theſe profound principles of natural knowledge are added ſome moral inſtructions equally new; that ſelf-intereſt, well underſtood, will produce ſocial concord; that men are mutual gainers by mutual benefits; that evil is ſometimes balanced by good; that human advantages are unſtable and fallacious, of uncertain duration, and doubtful effects; that our true honour is not to have a great part, but to act it well; that virtue only is our own; and that happineſs is always in our power.

Surely

Surely a man of no very comprehenſive ſearch may venture to ſay that he has heard all this before; but it was never till now recommended by ſuch a blaze of embelliſhment, or ſuch ſweetneſs of melody. The vigorous contraction of ſome thoughts, the luxuriant amplification of others, the incidental illuſtrations, and ſometimes the dignity, ſometimes the ſoftneſs of the verſes, enchain philoſophy, ſuſpend criticiſm, and oppreſs judgement by overpowering pleaſure.

This is true of many paragraphs; yet if I had undertaken to exemplify Pope's felicity of compoſition before a rigid critick, I ſhould not ſelect the *Eſſay on Man*; for it contains more lines unſucceſsfully

ceſsfully laboured, more harſhneſs of diction, more thoughts imperfectly expreſſed, more levity without elegance, and more heavineſs without ſtrength, than will eaſily be found in all his other works.

The *Characters of Men and Women* are the product of diligent ſpeculation upon human life; much labour has been beſtowed upon them, and Pope very ſeldom laboured in vain. That his excellence may be properly eſtimated, I recommend a compariſon of his *Characters of Women* with Boileau's Satire; it will then be ſeen with how much more perſpicacity female nature is inveſtigated, and female excellence ſelected; and he ſurely is no mean writer to whom Boileau

ſhall be found inferior. The *Characters of Men*, however, are written with more, if not with deeper, thought, and exhibit many paſſages exquiſitely beautiful. The *Gem and the Flower* will not eaſily be equalled. In the women's part are ſome defects; the character of *Atoſſa* is not ſo neatly finiſhed as that of *Clodio*; and ſome of the female characters may be found perhaps more frequently among men; what is ſaid of *Philomedè* was true of *Prior*.

In the Epiſtles to Lord Bathurſt and Lord Burlington, Dr. Warburton has endeavoured to find a train of thought which was never in the writer's head, and, to ſupport his hypotheſis, has printed that firſt which was publiſhed

laſt. In one, the moſt valuable paſſage is perhaps the Elogy on *Good Senſe*, and the other the *End of the Duke of Buckingham.*

The Epiſtle to Arbuthnot, now arbitrarily called the *Prologue to the Satires*, is a performance conſiſting, as it ſeems, of many fragments wrought into one deſign, which by this union of ſcattered beauties contains more ſtriking paragraphs than could probably have been brought together into an occaſional work. As there is no ſtronger motive to exertion than ſelf-defence, no part has more elegance, ſpirit, or dignity, than the poet's vindication of his own character. The meaneſt paſſage is the ſatire upon *Sporus.*

Of the two poems which derived their names from the year, and which are called the *Epilogue to the Satires*, it was very juſtly remarked by Savage, that the ſecond was in the whole more ſtrongly conceived, and more equally ſupported, but that it had no ſingle paſſages equal to the contention in the firſt for the dignity of Vice, and the celebration of the triumph of Corruption.

The Imitations of Horace ſeem to have been written as relaxations of his genius. This employment became his favourite by its facility; the plan was ready to his hand, and nothing was required but to accommodate as he could the ſentiments of an old author to recent facts or familiar images; but what

is eaſy is ſeldom excellent; ſuch imitations cannot give pleaſure to common readers; the man of learning may be ſometimes ſurpriſed and delighted by an unexpected parallel; but the compariſon requires knowledge of the original, which will likewiſe often detect ſtrained applications. Between Roman images and Engliſh manners there will be an irreconcileable diſſimilitude, and the work will be generally uncouth and party-coloured; neither original nor tranſlated, neither ancient nor modern.

Pope had, in proportions very nicely adjuſted to each other, all the qualities that conſtitute genius. He had *Invention*, by which new trains of events are formed, and new ſcenes of imagery diſplayed,

played, as in the *Rape of the Lock*; or extrinſick and adventitious embelliſhments and illuſtrations are connected with a known ſubject, as in the *Eſſay on Criticiſm*. He had *Imagination*, which ſtrongly impreſſes on the writer's mind, and enables him to convey to the reader the various forms of nature, incidents of life, and energies of paſſion, as in his *Eloiſa*, *Windſor Forcſt*, and the *Ethick Epiſtles*. He had *Judgement*, which ſelects from life or nature what the preſent purpoſe requires, and by ſeparating the eſſence of things from its concomitants often makes the repreſentation more powerful than the reality: and he had colours of language always before him, ready to decorate his matter with

every grace of elegant expreſſion, as when he accommodates his diction to the wonderful multiplicity of Homer's ſentiments and deſcriptions.

Poetical expreſſion includes ſound as well as meaning; *Muſick*, ſays Dryden, *is inarticulate poetry*; among the excellencies of Pope, therefore, muſt be mentioned the melody of his metre. By peruſing the works of Dryden, he diſcovered the moſt perfect fabrick of Engliſh verſe, and habituated himſelf to that only which he found the beſt; in conſequence of which reſtraint his poetry has been cenſured as too uniformly muſical, and as glutting the ear with unvaried ſweetneſs. I ſuſpect this objection to be the cant of thoſe who judge

judge by principles rather than perception; and who would even themſelves have leſs pleaſure in his works, if he had tried to relieve attention by ſtudied diſcords, or affected to break his lines and vary his pauſes.

But though he was thus careful of his verſification, he did not oppreſs his powers with ſuperfluous rigour. He ſeems to have thought with Boileau, that the practice of writing might be refined till the difficulty ſhould overbalance the advantage. The conſtruction of his language is not always ſtrictly grammatical; with thoſe rhymes which preſcription had conjoined he contented himſelf, without regard to Swift's remonſtrances, though there was

no ſtriking conſonance; nor was he very careful to vary his terminations, or to refuſe admiſſion at a ſmall diſtance to the ſame rhymes.

To Swift's edict for the excluſion of Alexandrines and Triplets he paid little regard; he admitted them, but, in the opinion of Fenton, too rarely; he uſes them more liberally in his tranſlation than his poems.

He has a few double rhymes; but always, I think, unſucceſsfully, except once in the *Rape of the Lock*.

Expletives he very early ejected from his verſes; but he now and then admits an epithet rather commodious than important. Each of the ſix firſt lines of the *Iliad* might loſe two ſyllables with very

very little diminution of the meaning; and ſometimes, after all his art and labour, one verſe ſeems to be made for the ſake of another.

I have been told that the couplet by which he declared his own ear to be moſt gratified was this:

Lo, where Mœotis ſleeps, and hardly flows
The freezing Tanais through a waſte of ſnows.

But the reaſon of this preference I cannot diſcover.

It is remarked by Watts, that there is ſcarcely a happy combination of words, or a phraſe poetically elegant in the Engliſh language, which Pope has not

not inſerted into his verſion of Homer. How he obtained poſſeſſion of ſo many beauties of ſpeech, it were deſirable to know. That he gleaned from authors, obſcure as well as eminent, what he thought brilliant or uſeful, and preſerved it all in a regular collection, is not unlikely. When, in his laſt years, Hall's Satires were ſhewn him, he wiſhed that he had ſeen them ſooner.

New ſentiments and new images others may produce; but to attempt any further improvement of verſification will be dangerous. Art and diligence have now done their beſt, and what ſhall be added will be the effort of tedious toil and needleſs curioſity.

After

After all this, it is ſurely ſuperfluous to anſwer the queſtion that has once been aſked, Whether Pope was a poet? otherwiſe than by aſking in return, If Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found? To circumſcribe poetry by a definition will only ſhew the narrowneſs of the definer, though a definition which ſhall exclude Pope will not eaſily be made. Let us look round upon the preſent time, and back upon the paſt; let us enquire to whom the voice of mankind has decreed the wreath of poetry; let their productions be examined, and their claims ſtated, and the pretenſions of Pope will be no more diſputed. Had he given the world only his verſion, the name of poet muſt have been allowed him:

him: if the writer of the *Iliad* were to claſs his ſucceſſors, he would aſſign a very high place to his tranſlator, without requiring any other evidence of Genius.

THE

THE following Letter, of which the original is in the hands of Lord Hardwicke, was communicated to me by the kindneſs of Mr. Jodrell.

" To Mr. BRIDGES, at the Biſhop of
" London's at Fulham.

" SIR,

" The favour of your Letter, with your Remarks, can never be enough acknowledged; and the ſpeed, with which you diſcharged ſo troubleſome a taſk, doubles the obligation.

" I muſt own you have pleaſed me very much by the commendations ſo ill beſtowed

beſtowed upon me; but, I aſſure you, much more by the frankneſs of your cenſure, which I ought to take the more kindly of the two, as it is more advantageous to a ſcribler to be improved in his judgement than to be ſoothed in his vanity. The greater part of thoſe deviations from the Greek, which you have obſerved, I was led into by Chapman and Hobbes; who are (it ſeems) as much celebrated for their knowledge of the original, as they are decryed for the badneſs of their tranſlations. Chapman pretends to have reſtored the genuine ſenſe of the author, from the miſtakes of all former explainers, in ſeveral hundred places: and the Cambridge editors of the large Homer, in Greek and Latin, attri-

attributed ſo much to Hobbes, that they confeſs they have corrected the old Latin interpretation very often by his verſion. For my part, I generally took the author's meaning to be as you have explained it; yet their authority, joined to the knowledge of my own imperfectneſs in the language, over-ruled me. However, Sir, you may be confident I think you in the right, becauſe you happen to be of my opinion: (for men (let them ſay what they will) never approve any other's ſenſe, but as it ſquares with their own). But you have made me much more proud of, and poſitive in my judgement, ſince it is ſtrengthened by yours. I think your criticiſms, which regard the expreſſion, very juſt,

and

and ſhall make my profit of them: to give you ſome proof that I am in earneſt, I will alter three verſes on your bare objection, though I have Mr. Dryden's example for each of them. And this, I hope, you will account no ſmall piece of obedience, from one, who values the authority of one true poet above that of twenty critics or commentators. But though I ſpeak thus of commentators, I will continue to read carefully all I can procure, to make up, that way, for my own want of critical underſtanding in the original beauties of Homer. Though the greateſt of them are certainly thoſe of the Invention and Deſign, which are not at all confined to the language: for the diſtinguiſhing excellencies

cellencies of Homer are (by the conſent of the beſt critics of all nations), firſt in the manners, (which include all the ſpeeches, as being no other than the repreſentations of each perſon's manners by his words:) and then in that rapture and fire, which carries you away with him, with that wonderful force, that no man who has a true poetical ſpirit is maſter of himſelf, while he reads him. Homer makes you intereſted and concerned before you are aware, all at once; whereas Virgil does it by ſoft degrees. This, I believe, is what a tranſlator of Homer ought principally to imitate; and it is very hard for any tranſlator to come up to it, becauſe the chief reaſon why all tranſla-

tions fall ſhort of their originals is, that the very conſtraint they are obliged to, renders them heavy and diſpirited.

"The great beauty of Homer's language, as I take it, conſiſts in that noble ſimplicity, which runs through all his works; (and yet his diction, contrary to what one would imagine conſiſtent with ſimplicity, is at the ſame time very copious.) I don't know how I have run into this pedantry in a Letter, but I find I have ſaid too much, as well as ſpoken too inconſiderately; what farther thoughts I have upon this ſubject, I ſhall be glad to communicate to you (for my own improvement) when we meet; which is a happineſs I very earneſtly deſire, as I do likewiſe ſome opportunity

portunity of proving how much I think myſelf obliged to your friendſhip, and how truly I am,

Sir,

Your moſt faithful,

Humble ſervant,

A. POPE.

THE Criticiſm upon Pope's Epitaphs, which was printed in *The Viſitor*, is placed here, being too minute and particular to be inſerted in the Life.

EVERY Art is beſt taught by example. Nothing contributes more to the cultivation of propriety than remarks on the works of thoſe who have moſt excelled. I ſhall therefore endeavour, at this *viſit*, to entertain the young ſtudents in poetry, with an examination of Pope's Epitaphs.

To define an epitaph is uſeleſs; every one knows that it is an inſcription on a tomb. An epitaph, therefore, implies no particular character of writing, but

may be compoſed in verſe or proſe. It is indeed commonly panegyrical; becauſe we are ſeldom diſtinguiſhed with a ſtone but by our friends; but it has no rule to reſtrain or modify it, except this, that it ought not to be longer than common beholders may be expected to have leiſure and patience to peruſe.

I.

On CHARLES *Earl of* DORSET, *in the Church of Wythyham in Suſſex.*

Dorſet, the grace of courts, the Muſe's pride,
Patron of arts, and judge of nature, dy'd.
The ſcourge of pride, tho' ſanctify'd or great,
Of fops in learning, and of knaves in ſtate;
Yet ſoft in nature, tho' ſevere his lay,
His anger moral, and his wiſdom gay.
Bleſt ſatyriſt! who touch'd the mean ſo true,
As ſhow'd, Vice had his hate and pity too.
Bleſt courtier! who could king and country pleaſe,
Yet ſacred kept his friendſhip, and his eaſe.

Bleſt peer! his great forefathers every grace
Reflecting, and reflected on his race;
Where other Buckhurſts, other Dorſets ſhine,
And patriots ſtill, or poets, deck the line.

The firſt diſtich of this epitaph contains a kind of information which few would want, that the man, for whom the tomb was erected, *died*. There are indeed ſome qualities worthy of praiſe aſcribed to the dead, but none that were likely to exempt him from the lot of man, or incline us much to wonder that he ſhould die. What is meant by *judge of nature*, is not eaſy to ſay. Nature is not the object of human judgement; for it is vain to judge where we cannot alter. If by nature is meant, what is commonly called *nature* by the criticks, a juſt repreſentation of things really exiſting, and actions really performed, nature cannot be properly oppoſed

poſed to *art*; nature being, in this ſenſe, only the beſt effect of *art*.

The ſcourge of pride—

Of this couplet, the ſecond line is not, what is intended, an illuſtration of the former. Pride, in the Great, is indeed well enough connected with knaves in ſtate, though knaves is a word rather too ludicrous and light; but the mention of *ſanctified* pride will not lead the thoughts to *fops in learning*, but rather to ſome ſpecies of tyranny or oppreſſion, ſomething more gloomy and more formidable than foppery.

Yet ſoft his nature—

This is a high compliment, but was not firſt beſtowed on Dorſet by Pope. The next verſe is extremely beautiful.

Bleſt ſatyriſt!—

In this diſtich is another line of which Pope was not the author. I do not

mean to blame theſe imitations with much harſhneſs; in long performances they are ſcarcely to be avoided, and in ſhorter they may be indulged, becauſe the train of the compoſition may naturally involve them, or the ſcantineſs of the ſubject allow little choice. However, what is borrowed is not to be enjoyed as our own, and it is the buſineſs of critical juſtice to give every bird of the Muſes his proper feather.

Bleſt courtier!—

Whether a courtier can be properly commended for keeping his *eaſe ſacred*, may perhaps be diſputable. To pleaſe king and country, without ſacrificing friendſhip to any change of times, was a very uncommon inſtance of prudence or felicity, and deſerved to be kept ſeparate from ſo poor a commendation as care of his eaſe. I wiſh our poets would attend

attend a little more accurately to the uſe of the word *ſacred*, which ſurely ſhould never be applied in a ſerious compoſition, but where ſome reference may be made to a higher Being, or where ſome duty is exacted or implied. A man may keep his friendſhip *ſacred*, becauſe promiſes of friendſhip are very awful ties; but methinks he cannot, but in a burleſque ſenſe, be ſaid to keep his eaſe *ſacred*.

Bleſt peer!—

The bleſſing aſcribed to the *peer* has no connection with his peerage: they might happen to any other man, whoſe anceſtors were remembered, or whoſe poſterity were likely to be regarded.

I know not whether this epitaph be worthy either of the writer, or of the man entombed.

II.

II.

On Sir WILLIAM TRUMBUL, *one of the principal Secretaries of State to King* WILLIAM III. *who, having reſigned his place, died in his retirement at Eaſthamſted in Berkſhire,* 1716.

A pleaſing form, a firm, yet cautious mind,
Sincere, tho' prudent; conſtant, yet reſign'd;
Honour unchang'd, a principle profeſt,
Fix'd to one ſide, but moderate to the reſt:
An honeſt courtier, yet a patriot too,
Juſt to his prince, and to his country true.
Fill'd with the ſenſe of age, the fire of youth,
A ſcorn of wrangling, yet a zeal for truth;
A generous faith, from ſuperſtition free;
A love to peace, and hate of tyranny;
Such this man was; who now, from earth remov'd,
At length enjoys that liberty he lov'd.

In this epitaph, as in many others, there appears, at the firſt view, a fault which

which I think ſcarcely any beauty can compenſate. The name is omitted. The end of an epitaph is to convey ſome account of the dead; and to what purpoſe is any thing told of him whoſe name is concealed? An epitaph, and a hiſtory, of a nameleſs hero, are equally abſurd, ſince the virtues and qualities ſo recounted in either, are ſcattered at the mercy of fortune to be appropriated by gueſs. The name, it is true, may be read upon the ſtone; but what obligation has it to the poet, whoſe verſes wander over the earth, and leave their ſubject behind them, and who is forced, like an unſkilful painter, to make his purpoſe known by adventitious help?

This epitaph is wholly without elevation, and contains nothing ſtriking or particular; but the poet is not to be blamed for the defects of his ſubject.

He

He ſaid perhaps the beſt that could be ſaid. There are, however, ſome defects which were not made neceſſary by the character in which he was employed. There is no oppoſition between an *honeſt courtier* and a *patriot*; for an *honeſt courtier* cannot but be a *patriot*.

It was unſuitable to the nicety required in ſhort compoſitions, to cloſe his verſe with the word *too*; every rhyme ſhould be a word of emphaſis, nor can this rule be ſafely neglected, except where the length of the poem makes ſlight inaccuracies excuſable, or allows room for beauties ſufficient to overpower the effects of petty faults.

At the beginning of the ſeventh line the word *filled* is weak and proſaic, having no particular adaptation to any of the words that follow it.

The

The thought in the laſt line is impertinent, having no connection with the foregoing character, nor with the condition of the man deſcribed. Had the epitaph been written on the poor conſpirator * who died lately in priſon, after a confinement of more than forty years, without any crime proved againſt him, the ſentiment had been juſt and pathetical; but why ſhould Trumbul be congratulated upon his liberty, who had never known reſtraint?

III.

On the Hon. SIMON HARCOURT, *only Son of the Lord Chancellor* HARCOURT, *at the Church of Stanton-Harcourt in Oxfordſhire*, 1720.

To this ſad ſhrine, whoe'er thou art, draw near,
Here lies the friend moſt lov'd, the ſon moſt dear:

* Bernardi.

Who

Who ne'er knew joy, but friendſhip might divide,
Or gave his father grief but when he dy'd.
How vain is reaſon, eloquence how weak!
If Pope muſt tell what Harcourt cannot ſpeak.
Oh, let thy once-lov'd friend inſcribe thy ſtone,
And with a father's ſorrows mix his own!

This epitaph is principally remarkable for the artful introduction of the name, which is inſerted with a peculiar felicity, to which chance muſt concur with genius, which no man can hope to attain twice, and which cannot be copied but with ſervile imitation.

I cannot but wiſh that, of this inſcription, the two laſt lines had been omitted, as they take away from the energy what they do not add to the ſenſe.

IV.

IV.

On JAMES CRAGGS, *Esq; in Westminster-Abbey.*

JACOBVS CRAGGS,
REGI MAGNAE BRITANNIAE A SECRETIS
ET CONSILIIS SANCTIORIBVS,
PRINCIPIS PARITER AC POPULI AMOR ET
DELICIAE:
VIXIT TITVLIS ET INVIDIA MAJOR,
ANNOS HEV PAVCOS, XXXV.
OB. FEB. XVI. MDCCXX.

Statesman, yet friend to truth! of soul sincere,
In action faithful, and in honour clear!
Who broke no promise, serv'd no private end,
Who gain'd no title, and who lost no friend;
Ennobled by himself, by all approv'd,
Prais'd, wept, and honour'd, by the Muse he lov'd.

The lines on Craggs were not originally intended for an epitaph; and therefore some faults are to be imputed to the

the violence with which they are torn from the poem that firſt contained them. We may, however, obſerve ſome defects. There is a redundancy of words in the firſt couplet: it is ſuperfluous to tell of him, who was *ſincere, true*, and *faithful*, that he was *in honour clear*.

There ſeems to be an oppoſition intended in the fourth line, which is not very obvious: where is the wonder, that he who *gained no title*, ſhould *loſe no friend?*

It may be proper here to remark the abſurdity of joining, in the ſame inſcription, Latin and Engliſh, or verſe and proſe. If either language be preferable to the other, let that only be uſed; for no reaſon can be given why part of the information ſhould be given in one tongue, and part in another, on a tomb, more than in any other place, on any

other

other occaſion; and to tell all that can be conveniently told in verſe, and then to call in the help of proſe, has always the appearance of a very artleſs expedient, or of an attempt unaccompliſhed. Such an epitaph reſembles the converſation of a foreigner, who tells part of his meaning by words, and conveys part by ſigns.

V.

Intended for Mr. ROWE. *In Weſtminſter-Abbey.*

Thy reliques, Rowe, to this fair urn we truſt,
And ſacred, place by Dryden's awful duſt:
Beneath a rude and nameleſs ſtone he lies,
To which thy tomb ſhall guide inquiring eyes.
Peace to thy gentle ſhade, and endleſs reſt!
Bleſt in thy genius, in thy love too bleſt!
One grateful woman to thy fame ſupplies
What a whole thankleſs land to his denies.

Of this inſcription the chief fault is, that it belongs leſs to Rowe, for whom it was written, than to Dryden, who was buried near him; and indeed gives very little information concerning either.

To wiſh, *Peace to thy ſhade*, is too mythological to be admitted into a chriſtian temple: the ancient worſhip has infected almoſt all our other compoſitions, and might therefore be contented to ſpare our epitaphs. Let fiction, at leaſt, ceaſe with life, and let us be ſerious over the grave.

VI.

On Mrs. CORBET, *who died of a Cancer in her Breaſt.*

Here reſts a woman, good without pretence,
Bleſt with plain reaſon, and with ſober ſenſe:
No conqueſts ſhe, but o'er herſelf deſir'd;
No arts eſſay'd, but not to be admir'd.

Paſſion

Paſſion and pride were to her ſoul unknown,
Convinc'd that Virtue only is our own.
So unaffected, ſo compos'd a mind,
So firm, yet ſoft, ſo ſtrong, yet ſo refin'd,
Heaven, as its pureſt gold, by tortures try'd,
The ſaint ſuſtain'd, but the woman dy'd.

I have always conſidered this as the moſt valuable of all Pope's epitaphs; the ſubject of it is a character not diſcriminated by any ſhining or eminent peculiarities; yet that which really makes, though not the ſplendor, the felicity of life, and that which every wiſe man will chooſe for his final and laſting companion in the languor of age, in the quiet of privacy, when he departs weary and diſguſted from the oſtentatious, the volatile, and the vain. Of ſuch a character, which the dull overlook, and the gay deſpiſe, it was fit that the value ſhould be made known, and the dignity

eſtabliſhed. Domeſtic virtue, as it is exerted without great occaſions, or conſpicuous conſequences, in an even unnoted tenor, required the genius of Pope to diſplay it in ſuch a manner as might attract regard, and enforce reverence. Who can forbear to lament that this amiable woman has no name in the verſes?

If the particular lines of this inſcription be examined, it will appear leſs faulty than the reſt. There is ſcarce one line taken from common places, unleſs it be that in which *only Virtue* is ſaid to be *our own*. I once heard a Lady of great beauty and elegance object to the fourth line, that it contained an unnatural and incredible panegyrick. Of this let the Ladies judge.

VII.

VII.

On the Monument of the Hon. ROBERT DIGBY, *and of his Siſter* MARY, *erected by their Father the Lord* DIGBY, *in the Church of Sherborne in Dorſetſhire,* 1727.

Go! fair example of untainted youth,
Of modeſt wiſdom, and pacifick truth:
Compos'd in ſufferings, and in joy ſedate,
Good without noiſe, without pretenſion great.
Juſt of thy word, in every thought ſincere,
Who knew no wiſh but what the world might hear:
Of ſofteſt manners, unaffected mind,
Lover of peace, and friend of human kind:
Go, live! for Heaven's eternal year is thine,
Go, and exalt thy moral to divine.

And thou, bleſt maid! attendant on his doom,
Penſive haſt follow'd to the ſilent tomb,
Steer'd the ſame courſe to the ſame quiet ſhore,
Not parted long, and now to part no more!

Go, then, where only bliſs ſincere is known!
Go, where to love and to enjoy are one!
Yet take theſe tears, Mortality's relief,
And till we ſhare your joys, forgive our grief:
Theſe little rites, a ſtone, a verſe receive,
'Tis all a father, all a friend can give!

This epitaph contains of the brother only a general indiſcriminate character, and of the ſiſter tells nothing but that ſhe died. The difficulty in writing epitaphs is to give a particular and appropriate praiſe. This, however, is not always to be performed, whatever be the diligence or ability of the writer; for the greater part of mankind *have no character at all*, have little that diſtinguiſhes them from others equally good or bad, and therefore nothing can be ſaid of them which may not be applied with equal propriety to a thouſand more. It is indeed no great panegyrick, that there

is

is incloſed in this tomb one who was born in one year, and died in another; yet many uſeful and amiable lives have been ſpent which yet leave little materials for any other memorial. Theſe are however not the proper ſubjects of poetry; and whenever friendſhip, or any other motive, obliges a poet to write on ſuch ſubjects, he muſt be forgiven if he ſometimes wanders in generalities, and utters the ſame praiſes over different tombs.

The ſcantineſs of human praiſes can ſcarcely be made more apparent, than by remarking how often Pope has, in the few epitaphs which he compoſed, found it neceſſary to borrow from himſelf. The fourteen epitaphs, which he has written, compriſe about an hundred and forty lines, in which there are more repetitions than will eaſily be found in

all the reſt of his works. In the eight lines which make the character of Digby, there is ſcarce any thought, or word, which may not be found in the other epitaphs.

The ninth line, which is far the ſtrongeſt and moſt elegant, is borrowed. The concluſion is the ſame with that on Harcourt, but is here more elegant and better connected.

VIII.

On Sir GODFREY KNELLER. *In Weſtminſter-Abbey*, 1723.

Kneller, by heaven, and not a maſter taught,
Whoſe art was nature, and whoſe pictures thought;
Now for two ages, having ſnatch'd from fate
Whate'er was beauteous, or whate'er was great,
Lies crown'd with Princes honours, Poets lays,
Due to his merit, and brave thirſt of praiſe.

Living,

Living, great Nature fear'd he might outvie
Her works; and, dying, fears herſelf may die.

Of this epitaph the firſt couplet is good, the ſecond not bad, the third is deformed with a broken metaphor, the word *crowned* not being applicable to the *honours* or the *lays*, and the fourth is not only borrowed, but of very harſh conſtruction.

IX.

On General HENRY WITHERS. *In Weſtminſter-Abbey*, 1729.

Here, Withers, reſt! thou braveſt, gentleſt mind,
Thy country's friend, but more of human kind,
O! born to arms! O! worth in youth approv'd!
O! ſoft humanity in age belov'd!
For thee the hardy veteran drops a tear,
And the gay courtier feels the ſigh ſincere.
Withers, adieu! yet not with thee remove
Thy martial ſpirit, or thy ſocial love!

Ami

Amidſt corruption, luxury, and rage,
Still leave ſome ancient virtues to our age:
Nor let us ſay (thoſe Engliſh glories gone)
The laſt true Briton lies beneath this ſtone.

The epitaph on Withers affords another inſtance of common places, though ſomewhat diverſified, by mingled qualities, and the peculiarity of a profeſſion.

The ſecond couplet is abrupt, general, and unpleaſing; exclamation ſeldom ſucceeds in our language; and, I think, it may be obſerved that the particle O! uſed at the beginning of a ſentence, always offends.

The third couplet is more happy; the value expreſſed for him, by different ſorts of men, raiſes him to eſteem; there is yet ſomething of the common cant of ſuperficial ſatiriſts, who ſuppoſe that the inſincerity of a courtier deſtroys all his ſenſa-

ſenſations, and that he is equally a diſſembler to the living and the dead.

At the third couplet I ſhould wiſh the epitaph to cloſe, but that I ſhould be unwilling to loſe the two next lines, which yet are dearly bought if they cannot be retained without the four that follow them.

X.

On Mr. ELIJAH FENTON. *At Eaſthamſted in Berkſhire,* 1730.

This modeſt ſtone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly ſay, Here lies an honeſt man:
A poet, bleſt beyond the poet's fate,
Whom Heaven kept ſacred from the Proud and Great:
Foe to loud praiſe, and friend to learned eaſe,
Content with ſcience in the vale of peace.
Calmly he look'd on either life, and here
Saw nothing to regret, or there to fear;

From

From Nature's temperate feaſt roſe ſatisfy'd,
Thank'd heaven that he had liv'd, and that he dy'd.

The firſt couplet of this epitaph is borrowed. The four next lines contain a ſpecies of praiſe peculiar, original, and juſt. Here, therefore, the inſcription ſhould have ended, the latter part containing nothing but what is common to every man who is wiſe and good. The character of Fenton was ſo amiable, that I cannot forbear to wiſh for ſome poet or biographer to diſplay it more fully for the advantage of poſterity. If he did not ſtand in the firſt rank of genius, he may claim a place in the ſecond; and, whatever criticiſm may object to his writings, cenſure could find very little to blame in his life.

XI.

XI.

On Mr. GAY. *In Weſtminſter-Abbey,* 1732.

Of manners gentle, of affections mild;
In wit, a man; ſimplicity, a child:
With native humour tempering virtuous rage,
Form'd to delight at once and laſh the age:
Above temptation, in a low eſtate,
And uncorrupted, even among the Great:
A ſafe companion, and an eaſy friend,
Unblam'd through life, lamented in thy end.
Theſe are thy honours! not that here thy buſt
Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy duſt;
But that the Worthy and the Good ſhall ſay,
Striking their penſive boſoms—Here lies GAY.

As Gay was the favourite of our author, this epitaph was probably written with an uncommon degree of attention; yet it is not more happily executed than the reſt, for it does not al-

ways happen that the ſucceſs of a poet is proportionate to his labour. The ſame obſervation may be extended to all works of imagination, which are often influenced by cauſes wholly out of the performer's power, by hints of which he perceives not the origin, by ſudden elevations of mind which he cannot produce in himſelf, and which ſometimes riſe when he expects them leaſt.

The two parts of the firſt line are only echoes of each other, *gentle manners* and *mild affections*, if they mean any thing, muſt mean the ſame.

That Gay was a *man in wit* is a very frigid commendation; to have the wit of a man is not much for a poet. The *wit of man*, and the *ſimplicity of a child*, make a poor and vulgar contraſt, and raiſe no ideas of excellence, either intellectual or moral.

In the next couplet *rage* is leſs properly introduced after the mention of *mildneſs* and *gentleneſs*, which are made the conſtituents of his character; for a man ſo *mild* and *gentle* to *temper* his *rage* was not difficult.

The next line is unharmonious in its ſound, and mean in its conception; the oppoſition is obvious, and the word *laſh* uſed abſolutely, and without any modification, is groſs and improper.

To be *above temptation* in poverty, and *free from corruption among the Great*, is indeed ſuch a peculiarity as deſerved notice. But to be a *ſafe companion* is praiſe merely negative, ariſing not from the poſſeſſion of virtue, but the abſence of vice, and that one of the moſt odious.

As little can be added to his character, by aſſerting that he was *lamented in his end.*

end. Every man that dies is, at leaſt by the writer of his epitaph, ſuppoſed to be lamented, and therefore this general lamentation does no honour to Gay.

The eight firſt lines have no grammar; the adjectives are without any ſubſtantive, and the epithets without a ſubject.

The thought in the laſt line, that Gay is buried in the boſoms of the *worthy* and the *good*, who are diſtinguiſhed only to lengthen the line, is ſo dark that few underſtand it; and ſo harſh, when it is explained, that ſtill fewer approve.

XII.

XII.

Intended for Sir ISAAC NEWTON. *In Weſtminſter-Abbey.*

ISAACUS NEWTONIUS:
Quem Immortalem
Teſtantur, *Tempus, Natura, Cœlum:*
Mortalem
Hoc marmor fatetur.

Nature, and Nature's laws, lay hid in night,
GOD ſaid, *Let Newton be!* And all was light.

Of this epitaph, ſhort as it is, the faults ſeem not to be very few. Why part ſhould be Latin and part Engliſh, it is not eaſy to diſcover. In the Latin, the oppoſition of *Immortalis* and *Mortalis*, is a mere ſound, or a mere quibble; he is not *immortal* in any ſenſe contrary to that in which he is *mortal*.

In the verſes the thought is obvious, and the words *night* and *light* are too nearly allied.

XIII.

On EDMUND *Duke of* BUCKINGHAM, *who died in the* 19*th Year of his Age*, 1735.

If modeſt youth, with cool reflection crown'd,
And every opening virtue blooming round,
Could ſave a parent's juſteſt pride from fate,
Or add one patriot to a ſinking ſtate;
This weeping marble had not aſk'd thy tear,
Or ſadly told, how many hopes lie here!
The living virtue now had ſhone approv'd,
The ſenate heard him, and his country lov'd.
Yet ſofter honours, and leſs noiſy fame,
Attend the ſhade of gentle Buckingham:
In whom a race, for courage fam'd and art,
Ends in the milder merit of the heart;
And chiefs or ſages long to Britain given,
Pays the laſt tribute of a ſaint to heaven.

This

This epitaph Mr. Warburton prefers to the reſt, but I know not for what reaſon. To *crown* with *reflection* is ſurely a mode of ſpeech approaching to nonſenſe. *Opening virtues. blooming round*, is ſomething like tautology; the ſix following lines are poor and proſaick. *Art* is in another couplet uſed for *arts*, that a rhyme may be had to *heart*. The ſix laſt lines are the beſt, but not excellent.

The reſt of his ſepulchral performances hardly deſerve the notice of criticiſm. The contemptible *Dialogue* between HE and SHE ſhould have been ſuppreſſed for the author's ſake.

In his laſt epitaph on himſelf, in which he attempts to be jocular upon one of the few things that make wiſe men ſerious, he confounds the living man with the dead:

Under this ſtone, or under this fill,
Or under this turf, &c.

When a man is once buried, the queſtion, under what he is buried, is eaſily decided. He forgot that though he wrote the epitaph in a ſtate of uncertainty, yet it could not be laid over him till his grave was made. Such is the folly of wit when it is ill employed.

The world has but little new; even this ſeems to have been borrowed from the following tuneleſs lines:

Ludovici Areoſti humantur oſſa
Sub hoc Marmore, vel ſub hac humo, ſeu
Sub quicquid voluit benignus hæres
Sive hærede benignior comes, ſeu
Opportunius incidens Viator;
Nam ſcire haud potuit futura, ſed nec
Tanti erat vacuum ſibi cadaver

Ut

Ut utnam cuperet parare vivens,
Vivens iſta tamen ſibi paravit.
Quæ inſcribi voluit ſuo ſepulchro
Olim ſiquod haberet is ſepulchrum.

Surely even the writer of theſe lines did not venture to expect that he ſhould have ever had ſuch an illuſtrious imitator.

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